THE COMMONWEAL

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THE TRUTH BEHIND THE TRUCE

SINCE man has an incurable habit of assuming endless conclusions from an insufficiently observed premise or two, it may be as well to do some straightening out, thus early, about the "truce" between the Democrats and Republicans that is supposed to last until 1932. It was a fair and generous thing on both sides, but only so far as it went. The seven leading Democrats of the nation proposed to do no guerrilla fighting and to coöperate with the Republicans in getting legislation passed. Senator Watson, the Republican leader in the Senate, accepted; President Hoover telegraphed Senator Robinson, the Democratic leader, a proposal to quash filibustering; chairman Snell of the Rules Committee in the House declared himself similarly and the Rules Committee runs the Republican part of the House. These are the facts of the record, and, that we may not be misled, now for what lies behind them:

There are two sessions of Congress ahead of the next campaign, known colloquially as "the short session" and "the long session." Theoretically the two are coequally legislative, but not in fact. The short session, which begins every alternate year on the first Monday in December, must by law terminate at noon on March 4; the long session, which begins on the first Monday of the next December, has no time limit for a year. Historically and immemorially, nothing much can be done in the short session except pass the year's appropriation bills; anything else, if obstructed, will lead to a "lame and impotent conclusion." The long session, if it begins in such a year as 1931, is the prelude to the coming presidential campaign, and both parties will and always do use it for gathering fodder and ammunition in the big fight they are thinking about.

In the nature of things, therefore, the offer of the seven Democrats and its straggling acceptance can only apply to the short session, and amounts to no more than an agreement that there shall be no filibustering between this December and March that will compel an extra session to deal with unfinished business. The seven Democrats and the various Republicans cannot possibly bind the long session beginning a year from December, which is a war-time session by prescription. In fact they could not even bind the short session, as was proved by immediate snorts of wrath from individuals, notably the peppery Senator Glass. There is nothing the Senate is so insistent upon as its coequal share in the government, a right exerted against not

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only unofficial leaders but against presidents and sometimes against the Supreme Court; always against the House. The value of the truce was not in any binding effect, but in a moral effect which was sure to reduce the kickers, Democratic or Republican, to a minority. So far as the party organizations were concerned, this moral effect was pretty certain to confine the coming short session to a session limited to supply bills and with no politics.

The weak point in it is that neither Republican nor Democratic organization has the say about what shall be done. The balance of power lies in men who condemn both organizations, and who are called "insurgents" or "progressives." If they choose, at any time before March 4, to disregard the truce, it will be up in the air and there will be an extra session. These insurgents are mostly Republican in name. They have no leader who can speak for them in even a moral sense. So far as they have one, it is Senator Norris of Nebraska, and only because he is a careful and thoughtful man. You hear more of Senator Borah, but he is a wildcat engine who commits nobody, even morally; he is the Borah party.

Mr. Norris laid down the law about the truce. He recognized that filibustering and making political capital would be out of place in this teetering short session, and he did not want it. But he had an advantage, which he was determined to use. The truce-makers must not think they could use the truce to shove over the Muscle Shoals bill, and some others which have already been political-managered to death in several Congresses; those bills, at any rate the Muscle Shoals bill, must be passed before March 4, or at least a vote must be taken. If the party managers did not agree to this, on them and not on the insurgents must rest the onus of filibustering and extra-sessioning. Chairman Snell recognized the whip and bowed to it; it is to be presumed that from President Hoover down the other leaders will have sense enough to see that Norris has the whip-hand. The outlook is good for a non-political session shared in by the insurgents, who have the power to upset the apple-cart at any moment. The only weak point is that they do not recognize a leader, even Norris, to whom they generally bow; and some of them are mavericks. The thing is not over, by a long shot; but the outlook is good.

As for the extra session, which a politics-playing short session would ensure, the objection to that is that instead of beginning in December, 1931, the purely political session would begin right away and last until the conventions of 1932; a thing not to the appetite of business, and still less to that of President Hoover. He, even more than President Cleveland on a like occasion, does not want "Congress on his hands." If he is forced, by deliberate inaction, to call an extra session to pass money bills, it must assemble early in 1931, to meet the date of the fiscal year; and that necessarily early call would mean a full year of nominal legislation and actual maneuvering for political position.

WEEK BY WEEK

THE CURIOUS muddle of nationalities in Europe that has in so many cases in the past been solved in the Gordian manner by the necessary arbitrariness of national frontiers, is something the average American bothers little about. The bitter experiences in Upper Silesia seem remote to him unless his descent makes him susceptible to vague stirrings of the race feelings that have led to so much spilling of blood and rancor in that unhappy land. Not so long ago, it was a more or less unvocal and long-suffering Polish peasantry that was appealing to the conscience of humanity against the brutalities of the Germans. Now the principals are exactly reversed but the situation is the same. The tolling of the church bells to warn farmers of the approach of legionnaires, the lining up of the farmers to defend themselves, and the wild hand-to-hand fighting with clubs, knives, pitchforks and spades, for which fighting the villagers seem invariably the ones to be accused and imprisoned, are incidents which appeared with as much regularity in the novels, for instance, of Ladislas Reymont, the Polish genius who portrayed so eloquently events before the war, as they now appear in current newspapers.

Poland and Germany

THE BRUTALITY is of course unpardonable on either side, yet the truly impartial observer, as our mythical average American may be assumed to be, is tempted to regard the situation with something like hopelessness. The claims on either side can find historical and humane justifications and yet are irreconcilable. In some quarters in Germany, the aggravations are considered sufficient for war with Poland and the partition of eastern Prussia from the mother country is asserted to be a thorn in Germany's side which makes the real pacification of Europe impossible. In spite of the marginal grindings of opposed racial interests, Poland at the center would seem to be making strides ahead. She has but recently celebrated her twelfth birthday as a nation since her liberation from 150 years of foreign rule, yet it is reported, as an evidence of her vitality, that in the last five years she has increased her annual output of coal from 16,000,000 to 27,000,000 tons, and now holds fourth place in coal production in Europe. Germans, however, look upon a good deal of this progress as being carved out of what they should have. This is the situation in its simple material statement. As our thoughts here in our own land, blessed with peace, turn toward Christmas, we cannot help marveling that the spirit and the fact of the brotherhood of man should still have made so little progress in the lives of so many. And we wonder how much appreciated is the position and importance of the Church as a main anchor to windward in preserving good-will against the winds of materialism. Only a more literal application of its teachings will moderate the antagonisms of inflamed nationalism.

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MASS production and the international dumping, so to speak, of publicity propaganda, appear to have become a major part of the famous Five-Year Plan of Soviet Russia. The drive along the "publicity front" is exceedingly impressive. It suggests the thought of a special board of strategy working skilfully in the background. Can it be that among the thousands of experts loaned or hired to the Communists by American and German bankers and industrialists, there also may be found some of our more experienced public relations counselors? For in addition to the weird, topsy-turvy news coming from the trial of the self-confessed traitors (one of whom actually recommends the Ogpu prison as a desirable health resort!), which was bound to attract first-page attention, the press is also being deluged with special interviews emanating from Stalin, and such stunts as the Associated Press's copyrighted statements, issued by the Soviet government, glorifying the Five-Year Plan. Stalin's sudden loquacity, after building up a reputation as the world's least known leader by virtue of years of almost unbreakable silence, is perhaps the most significant feature of the barrage of publicity now so dramatically launched.

Propaganda Offensive

DOES it all mean that Stalin really judges that Communism in Russia is now so safely and beneficially established that the knowledge of that fact will automatically lead to a demand by the rest of the world for the benefits of Communism? Or does it mean the exact opposite of that optimistic point of view? Are the trials of the traitors and the world-wide press ballyhoo simply the proofs of a desperate attempt to cover up the dangerous situation in Russia by arousing a favorable public sentiment there to a point that may permit Stalin to carry on a bit longer? At any rate, two points should not be forgotten by those who are trying to understand the puzzling Russian situation. First, that we only get from Russia in the way of news or opinions what the abnormal conditions of censorship and espionage permit to filter through, mostly in a sense favorable to the Soviet government. Secondly, that although in all the recent publicity there has been no mention of religious conditions in Russia, nevertheless the anti-God drive is still being most vigorously pushed forward. We shall publish soon a document sent to us from Rome, which will throw light upon this sinister side of the Russian picture.

IN WELCOME contrast to Einstein's recent utterances is the enormously significant talk on science and religion delivered over the radio by Sir Arthur Eddington on November 23. As the New York *Times* declared in an editorial comment, "No more important message than this stirred the ether of the continents on the day of sermons." One would like to have a complete transcript of Sir Arthur's lecture, but from the shortened version published in the press the main import is clear. A great scientist while boldly dealing with the laboratory and the telescope as the limited, though marvelous, sources of truth which they are, has defended spiritual fact as "elementary and inescapable." Man, says Sir Arthur, is not merely "a complicated physical machinery"; he is essentially "that which asked the question" as to his own origin, nature and destiny; he can challenge any possible robot that science may produce with the query, "Is it concerned with truth as I am?" "I would say," he continues, "that when from the human heart the cry goes up, 'What is it all about?' it is no true answer to look only at that part of experience which comes to us through certain sensory organs and reply: 'It is about atoms and chaos, it is about a universe of fiery globes moving on to impending doom, it is about a non-computated algebra.' But rather: 'It is about a spirit in which truth has its shrine, with potentialities of self-fulfillment in its response to beauty and right.'" From his own angle and in his own trenchant words, Eddington, scorning the timidities of pragmatism as a basis for religion, has forcefully argued for the spirituality of man's soul as a datum that science must reckon with. To the high priests and the acolytes of "materialism and determinism, those household gods of nineteenth-century science," Sir Arthur's memorable lecture should give food for disturbing thought, while to those who have defended true humanism through decades when most scientists have worshiped false gods, they are a joy indeed.

Science's True Spirit

THE ABBÉ LUGAN'S scholarly and authoritative article in this issue of THE COMMONWEAL on the Catholic attitude toward the purely economic aspects of Communism, will no doubt be startling to many who have assumed in a vague way that the Church was opposed of necessity to the whole Communist philosophy. It becomes perfectly clear that the Church is opposed only to those things which are anti-Christian and anti the perfection of man. It refuses to permit man to be held merely as a material chattel devoid of a perfectible and everlasting soul. The attitude of the Soviet government in denying and combating this essential liberty of man to possess and perfect his soul, is obviously the thing that must continue to make the Soviet of Russia as at present constituted a pariah among civilized nations. It is this that is the evil with which there can be no compromise.

Christian Communism

MR. JOHN CARTER'S article "Unconscious Socialism," which appeared in THE COMMONWEAL of December 3, pointed out specifically how the practices of Socialism—minus the label—have been widely adopted in America, and in their present workings, how there are some that few people would adversely criticize. If there is one law of history as regards political and social institutions that is without exception, it is that

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history is continuous. There is something in the restless nature of man that leads him continually to alter little by little, as well as by cataclysms, his purely temporal *mores,* whether this be called evolution, devolution or simply change. The social progressives seem inevitably to hold the balance of power, though this is not to say that the conservatives do not exert a highly beneficent influence in keeping the changes down to a speed that is not too feverish and destructive. That Catholic action in France which sought to identify the Church with the royalist cause which has been left behind on the shores of history, is an example of the sort of thing with which the Church will not identify itself. If the Russian Soviets could only find their souls and recover some of the Christian virtues of charity and forbearance, they could be welcomed again to friendly relations and be allowed to work out their social experiments without occasioning constant suspicion of their motives.

Factory versus Kitchen

IN THE last quarter of a century we have seen a good many social taboos vanish and a good many social cachets lose their force, with the wider and wider growth of democratic ideas. But the old tradition about domestic service still retains a mysterious hardiness. Domestic service for women, that is. Men servants have become too few since footmen went out, to constitute a problem. But that women servants, or women who might be servants, really do constitute a problem, is brought home to us all over again on a very large scale by the present economic crisis. We hear from the lips of officials in public employment agencies exactly the complaint that we are accustomed to from housekeepers: that they have a great many vacancies for women in domestic labor, with good wages and light working hours, but that most of their applicants are so desperately reluctant to adopt the status that goes with these benefits, that they prefer to go unplaced—and often hungry.

THE ENGLISH Minister of Labor ran into the same rock, in trying to assign unemployed factory girls to servants' jobs. The matter cannot be closed by calling all these women fools or snobs. They were reared on at least theoretical democracy, and if some special stigma or disability attaches to domestic labor done for pay, they will avoid it, as the night follows the day. That such a disability does exist, we can all pretty much agree. In spite of the paradox that a wife may do housework without impairing her social position, that college girls often earn their tuition by housework, that domestic science classes have given such work a real public dignity, it is still easier to ascend from the status of a pick-swinger than from that of a parlor maid. Why this should be, and what factors contribute to keep it so, we do not pretend to say. Certainly they cannot be intrinsic to the honorable, human and in many ways beautiful occupation of ministering to the comfort and happiness of the family in the home.

Medical Guilds—a New Angle

AS OUR readers know, our interest in the problem of the average citizen's medical outlay is not new. The subject is one that increases in pertinence. Through some basic maladjustment in our economic system—whether we express it by saying that medical standards are too high for the moderate income, or that the moderate income is too low for medical standards—the private practitioner's just and legitimate charges are rapidly becoming a disproportionate and intolerable drain upon that income. The really poor have access to clinics of increasing excellence; the rich need not worry about their medical budgets. It is the man in between whose case is growing desperate. These facts are, of course, generally recognized, and we have several times presented criticisms and suggestions bearing upon the matter from authoritative sources. Most of the constructive comment, it will doubtless be remembered, has dealt with various projects for cutting down private overhead by organizing the doctors of a given community into a unit for medical service, to be rendered the community in exchange for a guaranteed salary. The projected auspices differ. Some doctors urge their profession to take over the whole matter of organizing. Others advocate privately financed guilds. We are reviewing the subject at this time because it has been brought into active debate once more by two very different challenges.

NEW YORK'S Commissioner of Health is warning his colleagues that unless they adopt some device for bringing down their fees, the state will inevitably step in and commandeer the entire profession. At the same time, an article written for the *American Mercury* by a physician who quite understandably will not give his name, presents some thought-provoking strictures on one experiment in salaried medicine. Retained for several years as the physician of a "lodge"—a social and benevolent organization—he found it impossible, in spite of an enormous practice, to make a living. Part of the trouble was that, instead of a fixed salary, he received only a fixed proportion of each premium on "health insurance" paid by lodge members. A much more real difficulty, and one bound to carry over in any arrangement of the kind, was the determination of those members to get their money's worth. By the terms of his agreement, and of all such projected agreements, he owed them all the non-specialist service they needed, or imagined they needed, and the result was that his time and energy were largely taken up with preposterous and unnecessary calls. He won the unequal struggle only by adopting, at last, the unethical practice of splitting fees with X-ray laboratories and surgeon specialists. As we have said, this seems to us a very important criticism of those sorts of organ-

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ized or salaried medical service of which we have heard. Even if the attending physicians of a given unit or guild were many, there is no check provided, that we can see, against their being needlessly and limitlessly called upon. What could keep this from producing, at last, a listless and perfunctory service, or some defensive device bound to tell against many really sick patients as well as hypochondriac nuisances? The project of organization has appealed to us as in many ways sound and valuable. For that reason we should like to hear how one of its informed and active promoters would answer the *American Mercury's* anonymous doctor.

VOLTAIRE'S familiar cynicism to the effect that the great trouble with honest people was that they lacked courage, has evidently been the social philosophy of increasing numbers in America who vaunt their courage in dishonesty. Far be it from us at this point to go into the heavy issue that such an attitude is the natural product of secular education, with materialism under various names as its bounds. The result of the philosophy has become painfully and increasingly obstrusive of late. It was well described by District Attorney Crain of New York City: "The word 'racketeering' either has or is about to find a place in our unabridged dictionaries. Its meaning is known even to the children of the city. It imports the type of lawlessness which holds life cheap and for pay will do any deed, no matter how evil. It is the occupation and profitable calling of an increasing army of vicious and dangerous men. These constitute a more or less organized force under chosen leaders and with specified and recognized fields of activities. They levy tribute on the timid." However, it is likely that those who are timid in the face of pistols and blackjacks in the hands of racketeers, may now begin to pluck up some courage. Hopeful things are happening.

Honesty and Courage

FIRST in importance is the prospect of some change in the present absurd prohibition conditions which annually cause over two billion dollars to flow into the hands of law violators—a sum approximately three times the total national expenditures on the army and navy—without any return to the country in taxes by which it shall be able to finance the proper control of such traffic. Next, is the awakening public conscience in the matter. The recent meeting of forty distinguished New Yorkers with the District Attorney to consider means for fighting racketeering, brought from Attorney-General Mitchell an announcement that the Department of Justice had been assigning all extra enforcement officers to Chicago since summer and gradually strengthening federal forces there for a war on racketeering. Meanwhile members of the Chicago Association of Commerce are reported to have provided a special fund of $5,000,000 for a fight against crime and to have in operation a vigilante committee, "the secret six," who are investigating collusions between criminals and police and judicial officers. An indication of the extent to which racketeering has developed was given at the same time by an announcement from California that the fresh grape industries there had paid $4,500,000 to gangsters this year and that in districts where there were possibilities of the greatest sales, beer and rum barons were forcing a virtual embargo on the California grape juices which can be processed and made into wine in the home. The answer to Voltaire, we believe, will soon be given.

WE HAVE already commented at some length in a previous issue (November 26) upon the stand taken by the Catholic bishops at their recent meeting in Washington on the economic crisis, calling attention to the emphasis with which they reaffirmed the traditional principles of the Church in demanding justice as well as charity for the workers upon whom the main burden of distress must fall. Archbishop Hanna's fuller statement of the mind of the Catholic leaders was even more striking than the previous statement of the Administrative Committee. After again declaring that a guide to correct social action can be found in Pope Leo's great encyclical on the condition of labor, and in the Reconstruction Program and Joint Pastoral Letter of the American Bishops, Archbishop Hanna went on to say:

Justice and Charity

"AND AS a proof of their practical value both in this period of unemployment and at all other times, we quote briefly from one of them: 'A living wage is not necessarily the full measure of justice. All the Catholic authorities on the subject explicitly declare that this is only the minimum of justice. In a country as rich as ours, there are very few cases in which it is possible to prove that the worker would be getting more than that to which he had a right if he were paid something in excess of this ethical minimum. Since our industrial resources and instrumentalities are sufficient to provide more than a living wage for a very large proportion of the workers, why should we acquiesce in a theory which denies them this measure of the comforts of life? Such a policy is not only of very questionable morality, but is unsound economically. The large demand for goods which is created and maintained by high rates of wages and high purchasing power by the masses is the surest guarantee of a continuous and general operation of industrial establishments. It is the most effective instrument of prosperity for labor and capital alike.' Had this passage been heeded during the dozen years since it was written, it would in itself have gone far to prevent the calamity we now undergo. 'The humane and Christian, in contrast to the purely commercial and pagan, ethics of industry,' to quote again, will both cure our country of our present malady and prevent its cruel recurrence."

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NEW ART VALUES

TO US one of the healthiest signs in American art in a long time, is the new exclusiveness of the National Academy of Design. In its latest show, which will be open until December 21, are exhibited only the work of members of the Academy. To our mind, this represents the crystallization of a point of view. Ultimately this sort of independence will make for standards of value—something sorely needed since the war—and a precipitating of the present confusion into trends that will be constructively cumulative in their different directions. There will be a clarifying and simplifying of the situation. Artists will identify themselves with this or that school, and their works will be more readily distinguishable by the laymen as the sorts of things they like and, what is less important, the sorts of things they do not like. The latter they can simply continue to neglect, as they are now too much neglecting the whole field of art because of any unequivocal expressions.

It is a familiar fact that in the midst of confusion, are many strong, and oftentimes violent, individual expressions, but they so oppose each other that the resultant is negligible. The Academy, diametrically opposed to the wilder sort of things, for instance, that the Independent show glories in, permitted infiltrations of these into its former exhibitions. The result was too many occasions for comparison, and comparison while it may be interesting and permit pyrotechnics of critical exhibitionism, has little to do with the work of art as a thing in itself which the observer may approach with a humility and also with an assurance suggested by Whistler, considering not whether the thing is good or bad, but whether "I like it or do not like it." Those that like the Academy kind of art, may now find it in its purity; and purity is probably as good a word as any other to apply to it. The academicians kept the faith that fine painting requires a knowledge of how to paint and not merely an uncontrolled ego. In a sense they are the schoolmen of art and so have a particular appeal to our sympathy.

The thought suggests that Catholics could well wish for some equally unequivocal exhibition of Catholic art. This is an idea that the newly formed Liturgical Arts Society might well profit by. Perhaps we are merely suggesting something that they already have in mind. In any case, a show of art which was Catholic in spirit and application would undoubtedly draw a large and interested public. The Church is still one of the greatest patrons of art and one of the greatest inspirations to the lay patronage of art, though the quality of what it patronizes in our times is often questioned. This however is not something for negative criticism, but it is something for improvement by positive action.

The Academy may rightly be proud of a tradition of one hundred years; yet think of the traditions of the Church. The works of the world's greatest artists, great communal works of art unparalleled for beauty, the exquisite gems of the nameless primitives who offered their work to the use of God without any thought of personal vanity: all these things Catholic through the ages and Catholic in their spread throughout all the civilized world today, are a heritage too little recognized by the faithful. Catholic art is a testimonial of faith that can give great joy and is undoubtedly second only to the sacraments and the word of God in winning souls. To clarify it, to particularize it, to shake off encumbrances that have fastened parasitically on it, would be a work of the highest value.

Incidentally, the idea of the artist as a social pariah, long-haired, maltreated and *farouche,* is a modern convention that the Catholic tradition could be most useful in destroying. It was a *fin de siècle* idea, a visible sign of decadence, and its expression has no more to do with the creation of high art than eating spaghetti has, or living in Greenwich village. The Catholic idea of the artist, was of the joyous artisan. In the creation of beauty, he did not hold himself and his work apart from humanity as though it was too precious for them. On the contrary, he did his best humbly in the firm conviction that his best was never good enough for them and for the greater glory of God. The association of artists with artists and with those for whom they worked was happily inspired with the highest inspiration. It flourished in a communal spirit, the community of faith and the brotherhood of men. The new Liturgical Arts Society has shown a renewal in our time of this spirit in its desire to bring together the workers in religious and liturgical art. The spirit of the Church is essentially not that of the modern business world, of competition and devil take the hindmost. It is rather one of association, of common effort, of mutual helpfulness. This is the atmosphere in which the artist thrives. It encourages him to creation. It lifts from his soul the bitterness of indifference and discouragement which has been productive of so much that is distorted and repellent in modern secular art and which in a vicious circle has further alienated public interest in art.

The Academy show, as we have hinted, is an exception to this bitter art. It represents an intelligent and wide range of creation and appreciation. It is altogether an encouragingly pleasant show, and where in individual instances it fails through banality, we find this obviously less offensive than agressive bad painting and bad taste. It shows the constructive result of agreeable association, and its new exclusiveness is in no sense a negative one, but an expression of positive values. In this same spirit, we are sure a really representative exhibition of Catholic art would be welcomed and be profitable to artists and those who can only work in admiration. It should comprise not only modern works, but also the whole range of Catholic effort to expose love and faith in beauty, and it should be shown in every large city in the country.

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COCK, ROBIN & CO., PUBLISHERS

By ERNEST BRACE

Mr. Brace's analysis of the ills of publishing we thought was original and provocative. Tracing the expansion of the book printing business which was as phenomenal in its time as the present depression, he reviews the rise in the public's taste for social satire, on the one hand, and its taste for pre-digested pills of culture on the other hand, consumption of which the public fondly imagined saved it from being included in the point of the satire, says Mr. Brace. Hopefully he sees that the present collapse will lead to sounder culture, as many economists believe we face a saner era of prosperity.—The Editors.

TEN YEARS ago, while the publishing business was still a quiet and dignified—though perhaps a shade pompous—industry, a serious and minutely observant young man had just finished writing a volume of social manifestations. To give his array of human foibles a wide and impressive display, he assigned them to characters and proved them by means of incident. His book therefore bore that meaningless label, "a novel." The French would have called it more exactly, "une étude de moeurs." As to the commercial success of this bitter arraignment of his fellow-countrymen, the author was no more certain than were his publishers. Heretofore he had allowed his talents to be bound by the straightjacket of magazine requirements, but his new book, one that he had long contemplated writing, would be, he hoped, a stinging slap in the face to the being known as the average reader, who contributes his $2.00 toward the mysterious making of a best seller. Though there was no way of telling how the attack would be received, this particular story-teller, unlike most of his kind, had the courage, the energy, and the faith to write the book that he had always had in mind. The young man was Sinclair Lewis and his book was "Main Street."

During the decade since "Main Street" gave a pompous young nation, swaggering with the elation of a recently won brawl, a slap in the face, much has happened. The publishing business is no longer quiet and dignified, though it has preserved and even added to its pompousness. Just now, though the industry issues bland statements to the contrary, it is rather pasty-faced and hysterical. It is as busy today trying to figure out why people have stopped buying books as it was ten years ago trying to explain why so many thousands were anxious to pay $2.00 for the privilege of receiving the slap in the face. The answer to the question of 1930 comes as haphazardly as did the answer to 1920's problem. It is my opinion that the two questions are bound inextricably together.

Many reasons were hit upon to explain the success of "Main Street." The three most obvious and superficial were, and still are, the title, advertising and publicity. All three beg the question. Publishers, unless subsidized, have never advertised any novel very extensively that has not already gained some commercial momentum through some inherent quality, or whose author was not already a favorite. Likewise publicity, unless the author happens to be a Trader Horn or a Peggy Hopkins Joyce, is a question of geometrical progression. Books—and especially fiction—must somehow get started by themselves. In the past, the successful publisher of fiction has been the one who could divine what the public happened to want at a particular time, and never the idealist who hoped that because a book happened to appeal to him, he might, by means of reviews and advertising, be able to sell it. With books whose primary purpose it is to instruct, the case is different. Through advertising it is possible to make people afraid that if they do not read a certain work, they will appear ignorant. But when entertainment becomes a factor, the show has got to be what they want to see. In 1920 "Main Street" excited them. The title was apt and became a neat phrase of scorn, the subsequent advertising and publicity helped spread the good news, but, most important of all, what went on inside satisfied them or roused them. They began talking about "Main Street," and, with the funds normally available, such talk is the only possible form of publicity.

It is quite obvious that in "Main Street," as in all books of its kind, no reader sees himself, but he does see, with startling clarity, his neighbors. Nor does he admit that his own Main Street fits the picture; instead he views other Main Streets in other towns. So everyone could enjoy "Main Street," except those few who were too far removed from it. It was, at the time, scandal, and scandal is always exhilarating. Even though one may disbelieve it, one nevertheless enjoys it indirectly through one's indignation.

With "Main Street," the publishing business had discovered what any small-town dressmaker could have told them, that scandal is a paying business. And, of course, the better known the subject of scandal, the more valuable the story. Biography, once the trick had been learned, leaped nimbly to the top of the best-seller list. There is a close and fundamental analogy between the successes of two quite different men: Sinclair Lewis and Lytton Strachey; just as there is a definite association between "Main Street" and "Queen Victoria," whom the builders of the Street admired so deeply.

Naturally, upon the success of these two books there followed helter-skelter other scandals, less important, most of them, for scandals may make dull or interesting reading, depending entirely upon the ability of the monger. Sinclair Lewis was a good monger. His

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books satisfied an appetite. And, whatever faults one may find in "Main Street," one must nevertheless admit that, as far as its contemporaries were concerned, it was the most important novel of its decade. It was as far reaching in its influence upon the popular ideals and ideas of the author's countrymen and upon publishing as "Ulysses" has been upon the methods of contemporary fiction. The young man who threw up his comfortable contracts and wrote the book he had always had in mind was not to starve in a garret after all. As a matter of fact, a shrewd observer could have predicted that he would not starve anywhere. He has too much energy to enjoy such martyrdom.

I do not intend to suggest that Sinclair Lewis first introduced scandal into the credulous land of the cherry tree and the log cabin. There were others, fully as serious, before him, but somehow they did not achieve the influence that became his. Either the time was not ripe, or their methods limited their appeal. Sherwood Anderson had been too fumbling and too arty. Dreiser was too grim about it all; his attitude was that of the old-fashioned undertaker who was soon to be superseded by the merry mortician. In the field of history, Charles A. Beard's "Economic Interpretation of the Constitution" was prime scandal, but in those days it did not occur either to himself or to his publishers to popularize it. Mencken was hiding his light under the bushel of *Smart Set,* and it was "Main Street" that precipitated a public from the heterogeneous population of the country, for the forthcoming literary tabloid, the *American Mercury*. Heywood Broun and James Branch Cabell were providing whimsical scandal, but the former's audience was then limited to a small group which was demanding scandal, and Poictesme is many millions of miles from Gopher Prairie. There were others. There always have been others of one kind or another. But Sinclair Lewis, through a certain ability to hit upon the essence of the "homey" and the commonplace and to bring them out in high relief with the clarity of a stereoscope, caught the eye of millions of people. And others, who did not read or merely glanced through "Main Street," felt the scorn implied in the name, scorn, as I have said, not of themselves, but of their neighbors and friends.

At all events, "Main Street" was read or talked about, and—of great importance to the publishing business—frequently both. Forthwith it became everybody's task to prove to his neighbors and friends that there was nothing of "Main Street" in him, or—more often—her. The proof, obviously, was the display of some form of culture. Of course one was fundamentally a cultured person. It would be a simple matter to prove that one was not a person that this man Sinclair or Lewis or whatever his name was, wrote about. To the American citizen, culture is no long, laborious process; it requires no special aptitude. You read a book, or take lessons in something, simple lessons limited in number to about ten, just as you brush your teeth to avoid pyorrhoea or take mineral water to freshen your complexion. The publishing business began to boom. Between culture and scandal it looked for a time as if the publishing business were as sound an investment as oil or cosmetics. Outlines of almost anything were as salable as mouth-wash, and it seemed quite possible that culture could vie with antiseptic cleanliness as one of the American Penates.

And then something happened. No one seems quite sure as to what it was, nor do I hope to supply a categorical answer. I merely wish to suggest certain tendencies that seem deeply significant.

The fatal mistake that publishers made was in thinking that people who had suddenly begun buying books really read them, and in hoping that their curiosity would be roused and that they would buy more. Each generation seems to have its flurry of culture, its war and its moral upheaval. Such phenomena should be regarded from the same point of view as the generation's attacks of measles or whooping-cough, and not as indications of change or development. The culture of a generation depends upon a few victims of thought, never upon Main Street. The Carol Kennicotts, like all reformers, are merely noises; they echo a few times, and then give place to other poises, other echoes.

The echoes of "Main Street" were loud and impressive. Publishers pricked up their ears. Their book notices paid homage to the taste and discrimination of that frisky, unmanageable Percheron, the reading public. "Not as dumb as we thought," was their comment as they hired more help and kept presses running day and night publishing the outstanding books of the century, or the era, or the geological period. The books sold. Just as the American people were being educated to the advantages of owning two automobiles, so were they convinced that, even though they might have a book, the time had now come to own two. So they bought another. The speedometer on the second car shows that it has been run 18,643 miles, but none of the family has as yet got beyond page eighteen in the book. Nevertheless, having it on the living-room table is like having a certificate of service in the war. No one can accuse you of being either a slacker or an ignoramus. But, as to buying another . . . Well, some day perhaps. There isn't much time for reading just now. Meanwhile the publishers are holding long conferences, trying to devise means of placing another book on that table. Perhaps if we offered one for a dollar? . . . But here there is another difficulty. Even the one book already bought, in spite of its value as a symbol of culture, is also something of an incubus. It really ought to be read. Whatever its impression on visitors, it presents a sneering face to its owner. His fine resolutions to spend so much time each day in reading, in self-education, have mysteriously oozed away. At all events, he is certainly not going to bring into his home still another burden upon his conscience—not yet, anyway. Mystery stories, or,

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now and again, an outstanding scandal, he will buy, or perhaps borrow from the lending library, but as for the rest, he is playing hooky.

And nowadays there are so many things to worry about, that reading is unusually difficult. One's breath may be bad without one's realizing it, and one's digestion sluggish, and there are always teeth, and perhaps that last cigar had some dreaded germ on it, and one ought to make up one's mind to have a thorough physical examination every year. These are real fears that make any lack of culture seem pale. And another thing, there was that French course that was to give one an opportunity for dumbfounding all one's friends. Julia had rubbed that in for a long time, but lately, since she had started to learn to play the piano in ten lessons, she had not mentioned it. How do some people get time for reading anyway? And after all, where does it get you? If I started in talking about Plato or something like that, I would certainly get the raspberry.

In short, like our much advertised prosperity, our nascent culture is not the rock of Gibraltar it seemed. The great, enduring books of the decade, the books that rendered critics hysterical with praise, have become half-remembered titles. Many of those who clambered for a place on the band-wagon of culture have either fallen off in their sleep or left it in disgust. Even those who read books and who will always read books are, for the time being, slightly nauseated with the overdoses of "great literature."

The technical position, as they call it in Wall Street, is bad. Overproduction and the loss of public confidence have spoiled the racket. Though Peggy Hopkins Joyce and Will Durant and Ex-Wife may drive along Main Street with the calliope going full steam, Gopher Prairie has taken up Tom Thumb golf and few will go to the circus, even though the price of admission is cut in half. To return once more to the stock market analogy, what the publishing business needs and seems to be getting is a bear market followed by a long period of inactivity. The bears, even yet, are timid. If a few of them would stand up on their hind legs and claw viciously at what we have got into the habit of calling culture, business might have some chance of picking up again. At least habitual readers might be induced to risk their money once more.

All of which may sound as if, in my opinion, Sinclair Lewis should be held responsible for the sad state of American letters. It would be just as absurd to consider Benjamin Franklin the instigator of the confession fad. Interesting scandals, like interesting gossip, are stimulating and may be fine literature, but as a formula, they become dull. The publishing business, like the much discussed theatre, seems to be in no immediate danger of extinction. If publishers can once reconcile themselves to the fact that not everybody will buy every book, even at a dollar, perhaps our culture may be able once more to find a worthy target instead of spreading itself weakly, like a shotgun, over a widening area.

WAR CLOUDS OVER EUROPE

By GEORGE N. SHUSTER

BY THE time this can have been printed, the extent of Geneva's ability to promote disarmament will be rather clear. In all probability the most that can be hoped for this year is more complete statistical information about existing armies and their equipment. Gone, it seems, is the opportunity to capitalize upon the public longing for peace—upon that profound hostility to militaristic aims which appeared to be the one great positive result of the war. To the American whose good fortune it is to live under entirely different political conditions, the contemporary attitude of Europe must therefore seem unintelligible and morally reprehensible. The thoughtful Catholic, mindful of the numerous efforts of the Papacy to foster international conciliation, will likewise discern in the present drift of events a catastrophic indifference to the fruitful authority of Christendom. Nevertheless the causes which underlie renascent militarism are in some respects so vast and elemental that they baffle even the best intentions of men who are anxious to remove them.

Continental Europe is now lodged squarely between two huge armed camps. To the west is France, with a model army of 600,000 men outfitted with everything needed for warfare in the modern manner. Still more impressive is the fact that this extraordinary martial power is in the first instance an offensive weapon. A new system of border defenses—which the government itself refers to with pride—coincides with a recently developed navy to render France well-nigh proof against invasion. In almost every harbor from Cherbourg to Marseilles submarine target practice is now a daily pastime. The point most worth noting, however, is that this martial display was built upon a foundation of sincere desire for security. Because the French people feared another attack from Germany (one might almost say because the French people desired peace), there was gradually built up a post-war militaristic system which the nationalists can now use as an international weapon. Theirs is an almost unparalleled opportunity. Never before in modern European history has one nation's army possessed so much potential, comparative offensive power.

On the other side of the map there is Russia, the military strength of which is estimated by fairly cautious men in figures which almost baffle the imagina-

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tion. The Germans believe that the Russian army compares favorably with the French in every respect excepting experience. Moscow has paid a great deal of attention to technical branches of the service, including aviation and gas warfare. The roots of this power must be sought not primarily in any dream of Communist conquest of the world but in the practical needs of a dictatorship in a land of tremendous expanses and conflicting opinions. The Soviet army grew because it was the right arm of the Lenin-Trotzky-Stalin movement. Today, twelve years after Wilsonian idealism was rudely scattered upon the winds, this army is an international instrument with an incalculable future. Pitted against the French in some hardly imaginable new debacle, the Russians might well repeat the tragedies of the Napoleonic era and once more reduce whole sections of the Continent to heaps of smoking ruins.

An interesting fact to notice at this point is this: while the reasons which have led to the upbuilding of French military power are similar to the reasons which underlie the preparations for war made by such countries as the United States and Japan, most of the other peoples of Europe have gone through a period of development similar to Russia's. Social and political upheavals have caused governments to create standing armies usable against dissident groups. That is the case, for instance, in Italy. Mussolini's rule is based upon a *coup de force,* and the existing Italian military system has its origin in dictatorial necessity. The result is, of course, an army which may sometime be used as an international set of chessmen. A similar evolution may be observed in Czechslovakia, which is now rather proud of its regiments and boisterously applauded a review of officers and men on October 28, the national holiday. Originally designed as a Czech militia to keep the Slovak population under control, the army is now good enough to be used for other purposes. In Poland an ultra-nationalistic government continually employs army men against its political enemies and thus keeps intact a militaristic purposiveness not entirely concerned with domestic issues. Even Austria is developing an army as various factions struggle for the possession of machine-guns and hand-grenades.

Can anything be done to halt this trend and with it potential disaster of the most appalling kind? I shall not attempt to say. But one may test the plausibility of any given response by pointing to two easily studied varieties of experience.

In the first place, why is it that the Church's work in the cause of peace has borne so little fruit? One notices with astonishment, for instance, that some of Europe's most Catholic districts are especially averse to pacific action. Thus the endless squabbling along the Silesian frontier—one of the most disgraceful aftermaths of the Versailles Treaty—is almost exclusively a quarrel between Polish and German Catholics. The answer, one thinks, is the inbred *étatisme* of the clergy, which has recently led even bishops in central Europe to make statements in pastoral letters that are utterly out of keeping with papal encyclicals.

The second variety of experience is the breakdown of the Social-Democratic peace movement. One specific declaration of the Socialist platform has always been opposition to war as an instrument of international action. But the movement has never been strong enough to avoid compromise on the question of armaments, and it is today losing ground (most noticeably in Germany) precisely because young people, dissatisfied with the existing status quo, are more and more openly flirting with the idea of force.

Personally I believe these two varieties of experience demonstrate, even if there were no other corroborating evidence, the practical ineffectiveness of mere public opinion in a world chaotically divided by interests and injustices. I believe that the League of Nations is the only way out. I believe further that, regardless of the good arguments which can be advanced against such a conclusion, it will be to the advantage of both the United States and the Catholic Church to join that League. The dangers now threatening Europe may engulf the prosperity and hamper the development of the United States. They may bring upon the Church a sequence of disasters comparable with those which disrupted the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Of course they may not. But is there any capitalist who would now be willing to underwrite an insurance policy for international peace?

Sea Maid

Your mother said
Before you were born
Your hair would be gold
As ripened corn.

Your father said
Your eyes would be
Brown as a young
Chestnut tree.

Your mother prayed
Before you were born,
Mountain-blue eyes
And hair like corn.

But shadows deepen
In your eyes
When fog drifts
Over the skies.

When storms
Lash deep water,
You are the sea's
Daughter. . .

Your mother had eyes
Mountain-blue. . .
Who gave sea-green eyes
To you?

BORGHILD LEE.

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COMMUNISM AND THE GOSPEL

By ALPHONSE LUGAN

COMMUNISM in its essence is as old as the human will and the elements of our society. It will last as long as they do. As long as there are individuals possessing more land, dwellings and money than others, those either less favored or completely indigent will dream, not of stealing these goods but of turning them to common use, to everyone's profit and particularly to their own. The dreamers of Communism will not necessarily always be the disinherited. There will be among the very rich and landed proprietors some who with a gesture of generosity abandon their fortunes to realize equality. Does not the spirit blow where it listeth?

It did blow on some financiers and industrial and agricultural leaders of the Israelites. Having sold their goods, they voluntarily distributed the greater part to a community of 4,000 poor on the oasis of Engaddi, then themselves joined these poor people. In effect, 4,000 Jews of all conditions lived on the western bank of the Dead Sea in a locality where fresh and abundant springs break up the monotonous grey of the Judean Desert with a luxuriant vegetation of trees, of grass and of flowers. They walked in these verdurous surroundings dressed in simple white robes. For their very frequent ablutions in the running water, they put down a white cloth. No women were allowed in the district and a rigorous discipline was observed. "That which each one has belongs to everyone, and that which belongs to everyone belongs to each one." Neither dress nor food was owned individually. A treasurer administered for the community the goods brought to them and the fruits of the work of the individual. If the individual fell ill, he was cared for at the expense of all. In voyaging he carried neither money nor provisions. The 4,000 monks of Engaddi were the Essenes of the highest type.

These Jesus did not know. But He surely met the Essenes of the third order who tried to realize in the world the ideas by which lived their 4,000 cenobites of the oasis sixteen kilometers to the south of Jerusalem. Observe them with their white robes, their aspect of ascetics, mixing with the crowds which follow and listen to the Master. How they lend their ears and seem content when from His lips fall the words: "Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. . . . You cannot serve God and Mammon. . . . Be not solicitous for your life, what you shall eat, nor for your body, what you shall put on." It was as if they heard one of their own doctors and they hoped that this man soon would join them. Learned modern Jews, Gratz, Cohen, have alleged that He in effect joined the Essenes. M. Faguet has even written that in saying to the young man: "Sell all you have and give to the poor," He said to him: "Become Essen." These and others forget the decided attitude of Jesus against the customs of multiple exterior purifications which were at the basis of Essenism. In proclaiming: "That which goes into the mouth of man cannot make him impure, but that which comes from his mouth," He condemned the practices of these monks and those of the pharisees which were closely affiliated to them.

But in the end did He not accept their ideas on individual property, on the distribution of goods to the poor and on communal life? If His ideas implied the disappearance of individual property and the obligation for each one to distribute his belongings and put them to the common use, we must believe not. Here we come to the heart of the subject.

The Roman order instituted in Judea by conquest, required respect for property. This order of things Jesus recognized in imposing submission to Caesar. He acknowledged also the Jewish order which desired that "Thou shalt not steal," "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's goods," in declaring that He "came not to destroy the law, but to fulfil it." His parables explained the legitimate relations between the proprietor and the master and the lender, and the workman and the servant and the debtor; they enumerated the different contracts, sales, purchases or rents which depended on respect for private fortune and the distinction between patrimonies. Charity would not have merited His benediction if it was but a restitution. He proscribed stealing "non furtum facies"; and He condemned the avarice of the pharisees: "Vae vobis pleni estis rapina!"

No one does He reproach specifically for possessing lands, money or dwellings, but only for acquiring them in evil ways or managing them badly. It is not this or that form of property which preoccupies Him, but the idea that one has goods of which one must rightly dispose.

Here is His system. The Father Who is in heaven put at the disposition of all His childrens the earth and its riches to satisfy their corporal necessities. He conserves those goods which are their food and clothing as He looks after the lily and the birds. We ask of Him daily bread for ourselves and for all of humanity, for He is our Father, belonging to all. With these goods, of which bread is the most precious, we are obliged also to nourish and clothe and care for the sick among our brothers. In doing this we feed and we clothe and hospitalize Him, for He identifies Himself with all the necessities of humankind.

These goods have for us only a value of utility in the service of others, for "the life is more than the meat and the body more than the raiment." This service value is transient. Let us beware then of letting ourselves be absorbed by possessions. "Our

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life will never be measured by them, even though we possess them in abundance." At death they escape us and every day rust and worms gnaw them and robbers carry them away. One must never amass them for oneself only, if one does not wish to be "poor in the presence of God." He is the unique Master of the world's goods. Man is their administrator. In order that there shall be order, the Father of the human family has established stewards over His servants, groups among whom form individual families. These stewards justify themselves in the manner in which they acquit themselves of their function. Their primordial duty is that giving to the whole household "food in time of need," "the measure of wheat," says Saint Luke. By these stewards are meant not only the father and the mother, but also those who have in their service others working for them, and those who in the city have charge of their likes and must watch over order.

To the obligations of the manager of the domestic concerns of a family, correspond the rights of those of whom he takes care, sons, workmen, citizens who can demand their keep and their "measure of wheat." "Happy," is proclaimed the faithful overseer assigned to that task, in his solicitude for those under him. The unfaithful will be punished at the judgment in proportion to his thwarting of the will of the Supreme Proprietor. If the rich man suffer there, while the beggar is happy on the bosom of Abraham, is it not because he forgot his obligations of managing for the indigent? Not to share in one's earthly goods with those who have need is to turn them from their object, as one does in acquiring them by fraud. (Luke, xvi, 9-12), to satisfy one's avarice (Luke, xii, 15) without regard for the necessities of others (Matthew, v, 45; Luke, vii, 34), or to satisfy evil instincts of luxury or greed (Luke, xii, 19).

The goods of the world should be at the disposition of all. By their disposal is realized God's will being done "on earth as it is in heaven."

Such is, on the subject, the thought of Jesus. Nowhere in the Gospels is He shown to be disquieted by the custom of possession. Property-owners and Communists who heard Him would not have been able to find any argument on their system. His teachings transcended these contingencies. They applied to the opulent *oikodespotes* who possessed immense stretches of the earth's surface, and to the fishers who have only their nets, and to the Essenes where "that which each one has belongs to everyone."

Nevertheless it can be objected that He said to the young man: "If you wish to be perfect, sell all that you have and give to the poor." Yes, but He did not say this to him to condemn his individual ownership and impose on him the communal system. He intended simply to detach him from his goods in order that, not being embarrassed with their care and their upkeep, he should be able more easily to be perfect in being free for the service of God and of men. And he can be happy without belonging to a community of Communists and turning over to them that which belongs rightly to everyone. Thus were the Stylites, anchorites, and the married saints and those that were property-owners. The communal life which the monks of Engaddi practised and which later the Christian monks practised, does not come directly from the teachings of Christ on the use of the goods of this world. No more than the condemnation of the right of private property springs in any way from them.

All the negators of this right have nevertheless sought to claim Him. But though He does not condemn it and is not connected with Essenism, it should not be concluded that the form of communal ownership of property is opposed to His doctrine.

Not only is it not opposed by Him, but certain of His disciples, in order the better to live, to be perfect, some years after His death converted their belongings to common ownership. Cenobitism in its varied manifestations in twenty centuries has been a realization of the system of communal ownership of property. There has even been a monk who asserted that this special manner of disposing of the goods of this world was a monoply of monks. By this he implied that married people did not have the right to utilize it.

At the end of the fourteenth century in the great diocese of Utrecht, Holland, arose many communities of lay Christians. They were associations of farmers and workmen with an interior organization modeled on the régime of the monasteries of the period. Belongings were all owned in common and the association depended on the work of its members. In cases of scarcity of food the superiors went and borrowed in neighboring communities.

A Dominican of Groningue, Mathieu Grabon, declared war on these lay communities. He wrote several treatises to prove that the renunciation of individual property required of monks was incompatible with the duties which laymen had to fulfil toward society and toward each other. Among the twenty-five propositions which he enumerated and devoloped in support of his thesis, there were two, the third and the eighteenth, which should above all attract attention:

> Abdicare omnia etiam propter Christum, nisi vere approbatam religionem ingrediatur, est sibi et suis quorum cura sibi incumbit, vitam substrahere. Quod est homicidium committere tot hominum quot etiam ejus curae subduntur. . . . Peccant, propria sua resignant, non intrantes religionem approbatam. Ratio est, quia religiosorum est carere proprio, sicut secularibus est necessarium retinere proprium.

The doctrine of Grabon becoming a subject of a serious debate, it was submitted to the judgment of Pope Martin V, in 1417, during the holding of the Council of Constance. The Pontiff charged the cardinals of the council to examine it, among whom was the celebrated Pierre d'Ailly, Archbishop of Cambrai, and the illustrious chancellor of the University of

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Paris, Jean Gerson. And here again the true principles of the Church received a remarkable sanction.

After profound discussion, the cardinals unanimously rejected all propositions of Mathieu Grabon. They recognized that the common ownership of property among laymen, and therefore by society in general, had nothing which was opposed to Catholic doctrine. The Christian, they said, is free to conserve his belongings legitimately acquired, but also he can, following the example of the Christians of Jerusalem, abandon some or all of them to the profit of his brothers:

> Propositiones sive conclusiones, super quibus fit inquisitio, habent fundamentum erroneum, repugnant nedum rationi theologicae et morali, sed etiam observationi primitivae ecclesiae quae scribitur. Actor. 4.

The Pope and the council approved the sentence of the cardinals and Grabon was obliged solemnly to abjure his errors.

> Thus it was that the Church in the middle ages, though still little known, preserved the truths of religion. I hope that a distinguished economist will soon investigate this unexplored mine. It would be for the Church a work of testimonial, for all a good lesson, and for the author himself a title to durable glory.

The above document and the reflections are taken from "Socialism since Antiquity," by J. J. Thonissen, professor in the faculty of law at the Catholic University of Louvain. The book appeared in 1852 in Paris and Louvain.

All systems of property which satisfy the needs of humanity are accepted by the New Testament. Each one should assure the possibilities for everyone to have "his daily bread" asked for in the "Our Father"; it should assure the minimum necessary to preserve virtue, for after fasting forty days, Jesus was hungry and then temptation came to Him. Temptation, whatever its aspect, easily enters the doors of the mansion where misery has broken down the strength of the body and the spirit. Together they are led away and commit crime.

Private property becomes common property as soon as urgent and legitimate human need makes itself known. Thus intended the old law. To snatch a head of corn in crossing the field of another, to appease one's hunger, is not an offense against the rights of property (Deuteronomy, xxiii, 26; Matthew, xii, 1-8). More, hunger excuses even sacrilege, and David and his companions, being hungry, ate the hallowed bread which was offered by the priest without sinning, (I Kings, xxi, 1-6). That property which one legitimately manages, should aid others to live, in lending them, without hope of profit, that which is necessary and which they have not (Luke, vi, 29-36); in compensating for the expenditure and forces put to our service, for "the workman is worthy of his meat" (Matthew, x, 10); in giving to the needy (Luke, vi, 30, x, 25-37); and in nourishing the hungry as did Jesus (Mark, vii, 1-10). At the last day, he will hold these acts of good administration of wordly wealth for the profit of those who needed them, as though they had been rendered to Himself (Matthew, xxv, 31-46).

CHRISTMAS CARDS FOR DIONYSUS

By JOSEPH FRANT-WALSH

INCREDIBLE, but there it was—a Christmas card flaunting maroon monkeys in a frosted jungle. Marooned monkeys in a frosted jumble, I almost said. It is all quite the same. The monkeys in turn boasted long maroon tails hopelessly tangled into complicated arabesques and capricious scrolls forming the words "Merry Christmas." Incredible, but there it was.

You pitied the monkeys. Their faces wore a look of embarrassed astonishment mixed with rather hopeless complacency. True, their frosted jungle provided an altogether dainty foil, but you felt the colorful simians had known pleasanter haunts. Evidently, too, they vastly preferred more wholesome complexions than those with which the artist had endowed them. But more than anything else, they were so completely tired of holding their tails in a manner fantastic enough to spell "Merry Christmas" that their lower natures were really on the verge of something. The monkeys wanted to bolt. They wanted to clatter and shatter their way through the frosted jungle until even the most musical tinkling of icy palm and fern would be nothing but a slightly tinkling memory. Then they would rest their tails for literally days. And so one pitied the monkeys.

But no matter how deeply one pitied those outraged creatures, one had still deeper pity for the person to whom Christmas was synonymic with maroon monkeys in rococo attitudes. You shook your head, perhaps, as you laid the card aside, but your heart went out to the sender with acute concern. Was it not quite as if the person rushed to you on Christmas morning and shouted: "Be glad! It is Christmas, whatever that is. I wish you happiness like mine for I am filled with joy. See—my heart is filled with many maroon monkeys!"

Dear souls! You want to fold such people into your arms like little children and whisper into their restless ears a reassuring word or two to the effect that, after all, the passing of the Victorian era included neither the passing of Bethlehem nor the abolishment of good taste and that the *art moderne* really

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hasn't a thing to do with the Crib. Such a person would not be offended because of your impertinence. They would be a little amused, but still impenitent. They would speak of the incident to other persons—rather queer, baffling persons.

Distressing is it not—this curious decadence among our Christmas cards? Odd, this Yuletide preoccupation with strange animals. Do people read no one but Apuleius? Apparently. Once Judea's teeming inns were too full to let the Christ of Christmas in. Even now there is no room for Him upon the Christmas cards. Poor little Bambino! Smart people have wrapped Him up in Paisley shawls. They have forgotten where they laid Him.

"Babies aren't very fashionable, anyhow," these melancholy cards agree, "and why spoil Christmas with the Christ Child? People are depressed enough without being reminded of unpleasant places like rude little barns and young mothers having babies in the straw. The idea is rather repellent anyhow. Even if there were no room in the inns, they should have made arrangements in advance. Welfare agencies wouldn't stand for that sort of thing today. They would investigate and make reports and psych the young mother."

"Anyhow," these Christmas cards would have one believe, "Christmas isn't the somewhat messy affair it used to be. People who really matter don't go in for that sort of thing. One gives presents, of course—smart ones—and smart presents are received in a sort of detached, impersonal manner. The world has neither time nor wish to indulge in archaic sentimentality. Among people who really know, Christmas is but a convention at best. If cards be sent, the modern selects those that are abstract and conventional in design and certainly none that might offend because of any religious significance. Few are the types who can afford to be naive these days; few who dare admit they believe."

Do these Christmas cards know whereof they speak? Perhaps they do. An unhappy survey of the types carried by fashionable shops would seem to confirm such an admission. One wonders who and what are they who flood the counters with "distinctively modern" Christmas cards. At what crumbling shrine of Dionysus does this cult retire, only to emerge bearing in their hands perverted designs of chimerical beasts for the delectation of jaded tastes? The current revolt against established artistic forms and concepts is perhaps understandable. The vanity and personal egotism of certain types of artists is notorious: they will be different at any price. But if revolt this be, why make Christmas cards revolting?

It is true there were beasts beside the Manger. We love the memory of those dumb witnesses of Christ's birth—those placid, large-eyed creatures that warmed Him with their meadowy breath. We could condone this perennial flood of animal pictures at Yuletide had it a thing to do with those oxen and sheep and if the Crib were in the picture, too. But this fantastic procession of triangular, undernourished gazelles (Reindeer? Spare the mark!)—gazelles leaping over one knows not what, bounding whither no one can quite imagine—is strange to stables and straw alike. If Christmas were celebrating the emergence of created things from Noah's ark, one would not complain of greeting cards depicting confused reminiscences of a too hasty visit at the zoo. But Christmas isn't that.

Who, one still wonders—who are they who would turn Christmas into a festival of the birth of Dionysus, the panther-charioted? Ah—and this more pointedly—who are they who send that sort of emancipated gibberish to helpless acquaintances? Charity really forbids reply. They are eaten up with catch-words—"sophistication," "distinctiveness," "moderne." They are a prey to a vaunted "culture," while an imaginary "smartness" has turned them into dullards, the victims of an almost pathological inability to face certain inescapable facts of which the Nativity is the most inescapable.

We pity those unhappy maroon monkeys in their frosted jungle. Still more, surely, should we pity the senders of those Christmas cards for Dionysus and his train of cubiform, triangular beasts skipping brittlely on crystal legs farther and farther from Bethlehem and its Crib.

Yet is this phenomenon so utterly depressing? Perhaps this lamentable carelessness about Christmas cards is only that—a lamentable carelessness. Perhaps the thing has no sinster significance, no even remote connection with confused ideas, much less with discarded ideals. Perhaps the thing is but a current mannerism, a harmless vogue of the day. Perhaps. One's hope is rudely jolted, however, by the consideration that neither mannerisms nor vogues were associated with the reality of Bethlehem's squalid stable. Only Truth was there—a Truth eternally hostile to the triangular gazelles and the maroon monkeys of a Dionysus.

Precaution

Let us look sharp at giddiness and laughter,
Now that the sun runs low and frost strikes deep.
Let us resign illusion, let us be after
Strength, a bed-rock where things immortal sleep.

This is philosopher's season, dead term
Of reckoning, test of enduring things.
Now naked sinews of trees bravely confirm
Their strength; passion reveals its fragile wings.

In the nights of long white hours and silence, cold
Will purge the fleshy growth of ecstasy.
The fiber which remains will staunchly hold
That which is good for immortality.

Let us put by our vulnerable rapture.
Now is the time to look life in the eyes.
Now when the frost strikes deep is time to capture
Strength, and the clear sight of the wise.

FRED H. LAPE.

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Places and Persons

THINGS THAT I MISSED

By GENEVIEVE GARVAN BRADY

WHEN it was suggested that I write an article on what Girl Scouting has meant to me, my first impulse was to refuse on the ground that I was not qualified to do so. There was no Girl Scouting in the days when I was going to school. I never followed a trail with a group of singing girls or hunted the nest of an oven-bird through tangled brushwood. I never watched a camp-fire burn to a crimson glow and whiten, while I listened to the sounds that emphasize the night's silence. I never cooked a hunter's stew in an open field and ate it with the appetite of a pioneer. How could I say then what Girl Scouting had meant to me, when I had never done real Scouting?

But, as I thought about it, it struck me that, with the mode of the title changed, I could easily adopt the suggestion. I have been associated with Girl Scouts for over ten years. I have assisted at their councils, watched the girls in their camps and seen them holding their courts of honor in their patrol corners. I have walked with a group of them in a garden and listened enviously to their comments on the birds and flowers. I realize what Girl Scouting might have meant to me and how much I missed by the fact that Juliette Low introduced it to this country only in 1912. So, with the "might have" substituted for the "has," I shall try to tell something of Girl Scouting, as I see it.

We all know what it means to lie awake at night and listen to the voices of people passing in the street. They may be shrill or soft, cheerful or discontented, but, unless memory associates them with a face and a figure, they have no meaning for us but are empty as an echo. When I walk through a summer garden, I hear trills and chirps. I sniff odors that are acrid and odors that are fragrant. I see leaves that are sage green and emerald green and olive. But only occasionally can I tell from what throat the trill comes, what flower gives forth that perfume or what tree has lost that leaf. I may be pleased or displeased by what I see, hear and smell, but I rarely have the satisfaction of instant recognition. The inhabitants of the garden may be charming, but only a few are my intimate friends. Fewer still do I know as a Girl Scout knows them—not merely their features but their habits, whence they've come, how long they'll stay and how they can be induced to return. Too many of them are for me like the voices in the streets, empty as an echo as far as I am concerned. That is one reason why I regret the fact that Juliette Low introduced Scouting too late for the American girls of my day.

A second reason deals with comradeship, one's love for and understanding of one's own kind. Everyone recognizes the importance of gang spirit in determining a boy's character and conduct through life. Few recognize that the cliques in a girl's school are evidence of exactly the same spirit. A clique may not be a bad thing in itself but it usually has its origin in a wrong attitude, in snobbery or in an emotional state. Fundamentally, of course, it expresses the human instinct for the herd. The girls want to do things together, things that are exciting and mysterious and usually undefined. They are badly in need of a leader, but instead they are apt to be led by a domineering companion.

Girl Scouting makes full use of the herd instinct in the troop which is divided into four patrols of eight. It provides a program which includes practically every occupation known to be popular among girls. A sense of cohesion and comradeship is supplied by the patrol which is small enough to give scope for the individual. The spirit of competition is kept alive by the existence of the three other patrols, while the unity of the whole and the standards of the organization are maintained through the court of honor. You have here a miniature democracy ruled by the girls themselves under the guidance of a self-effacing captain who is the only adult in this small world.

The court of honor is invaluable for the development of character, sound judgment, tolerance and self-criticism. It consists of the patrol leaders selected by the girls themselves from within the patrol and is presided over by the captain. It decides on the business of the troop—whether it will hike next Saturday, put on a play for a nursery, buy some equipment and pay for it through the sale of home-made candy. More important than the business is the burden which it must shoulder in maintaining the standards of the organization.

Inevitably in a group of thirty-two young people, the clash of character will be quickly apparent. Somewhere is bound to arise the boss who, under pretense of helping others, seeks to impose her will. The potential sneak, the coward, the slovenly girl and the supersensitive will make their influence easily felt. Where they threaten the peace of this small society or fail to take advantage of its benefits, they become subject for discussion by the court of honor. If Mary Smith is too aggressive for the comfort of her companions, the most tactful member of the court may take her aside for a pointed talk. If Helen Jones is so shy that she is becoming a butt for the others, the court may decide to give her a responsible piece of work or perhaps a good part in a play. That has been known to cure a bad case of shyness. A girl has to be objectionable in a serious way before expulsion from the

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troop is considered. Girl Scouting aims at character building, and to eject a girl is to confess failure. The task done by the court of honor, then, is unrivaled training in character discernment, kindness, patience and good temper. You can't be a Girl Scout and dislike your kind. You can't serve on a court of honor —and all Girl Scouts serve on one sometime— without learning to analyze motives and moods. Girl Scouting opens the mind to the mysteries of human psychology and the delights of human friendship, in much the same manner as nature study opens one's eyes and ears to the beauties of the world about us. A Girl Scout starts life with a tolerance of another's foibles and an understanding of her own that most of us have to learn painfully through adult experience.

That is a second reason why I regret the non-existence of the Girl Scouts in my school days.

Both these reasons refer to losses that are irreparable, once you have passed the age of eighteen. But there is another loss to the non-Scout, which is reparable at any age, provided she chooses to become a leader. One of the greatest services which this organization performs from the standpoint of the adult is in the bridge it throws across the generations. To use Scouting terms, the girls and their leaders share a trail, on which the enthusiasm of the one is constantly being checked against the experience of the other, and the caution of the elder constantly spurred by the courage of the younger. Each in consequence has the other's respect and trust. You won't find a Girl Scout captain complaining that the younger generation is headstrong, or irreverent or indifferent to the feelings of others. She knows better. She recognizes that the girl of today moves to a different rhythm from the girl of twenty years ago, and she knows the reason why. It is only in the natural course of events that the tempo of the carriage age had to be quickened to suit that of the airplane. She admits that the surface of life has changed but she does not admit that fundamentals have changed with it. Again she knows better. She knows that honor, loyalty, helpfulness to others and cleanliness of thought and deed are as valuable today as they were fifty years ago to the girl eager for ultimate happiness. And because she is sensitive to the demands of the present, the girls accept her experience of the past. She is at once the haven of refuge for those fleeing the wrath of the traducers of this generation and the bulwark of defense for the best in all the generations that have gone before. The gain, naturally, is as much the captain's as the girls'. No woman can grow really old who is constantly in contact with youth. The spirit of any age speaks most convincingly because most unconsciously through the mouths of its boys and girls, and you can't fall behind the times, if that voice is constantly forcing you to keep your opinions and attitudes in step with them. Tolerance not only of one's contemporaries, but of one's seniors and juniors, is the natural corollary of the foregoing.

I might go on for a long time before I reached the limit of Scouting's possible benefits, so perhaps I had better try to sum them up in one sentence. To the Girl Scout the world of nature is more beautiful and more full of wonder and the world of people more diversified and more full of friends than either could possibly be to the girl or woman who has not shared the trail it keeps open for all.

AN ADAMS IN A MONASTERY

By LEONARD SARGENT

MY FIRST meeting with Mr. Brooks Adams will have been some ten or more years ago. The appearance of the "Letters" of his brother Henry, and the conviction that Brooks Adams represented a type that has been, if not always a direct outcome of the great war, somewhat noticeable since the armistice, have prompted this paper.

Between Mr. Adams and the late Bellamy Storer there had existed, for a considerable period, a real and sympathetic friendship. It would seem that questions of religion had been often discussed by them. The one was a convert and a most consistent and devout Catholic, the other was uncertain what he should call himself except, as will be seen, "the man without a faith." "Without a country"—one might have quoted the title with exactness in describing a man who seemed to be groping blindly and longing pathetically for a *patria*. Saint Paul writes of the desire for "a better, that is to say, a heavenly country."

Mr. Storer had discovered this homesickness in his friend. He saw that in this intellectual, the product of New England Puritanism—its forbidding doctrines converted into Unitarian formlessness, yet their old poison lingering on—there was a recognition of the limitations of the natural reason. He saw a soul reaching forward and seeking for another endowment of God, beyond and greater than reason—faith.

At Mr. Storer's request, I called on Mr. Adams at his home in Boston. He was out of the city. When he learned of my visit, it was like this gentleman of old-fashioned conventions not to telephone but to drive out to the suburb where I was staying to invite me to dine with him. I did so. After we had left the table, it was he and not I who introduced the subjects we discussed at this time. He asked several questions bearing on monastic life. I answered these and incidentally spoke of it as a life of peace, adding that *Pax* is a Benedictine motto. My host had already led up to this particular explanation by a remark which I shall quote in substance:

"The whole world is upset. Nobody seems to know how to set it right. People speak of this life as a preparation for eternity. Is there any spot on the top of this earth where a man like me could go and end his days in peace? My dear sir! How *could* one do that in the turmoil of these days?"

He listened to my Benedictine story, paused and thought for a time. Then he asked, "Why shouldn't I come, as you tell me others do, and try to catch a little of your peace?"

And so he came and remained through the week. He apologized for being a "pagan," yet presuming to enter a sanctuary. He did this, precisely, by not entering—standing instead at the chapel door each morning while the Holy Sacrifice was offered twice in succession.

In view of this practice, Mr. Adams's apology was answered with a remonstrance, a deprecation perhaps: "No, you are not a pagan; you are better than that." His reply was surprising

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and will be interpreted later: "But I *am* a pagan; I have no real belief. I stand at that door—I prefer to stand outside—and I am then one of yourselves. When I talk with you apart from your chapel, I am a pagan." Before such an honest acknowledgment, and considering the extraordinary incident in the early morning hours, there was nothing to be said. It would have been both unwise and ungenerous to pursue the point further. It seemed to be exclusively an affair of God.

But at times our guest would, of his own volition, call out of his mind thoughts that appeared to be working within. He asked, of me, certain doctrinal questions; of another in the community better equipped than I, questions relating to Scholastic philosophy. But he was always the "pagan." And yet he carried about with him and read frequently a book he had found in the library, the "Fioretti" of Saint Francis of Assisi!

One feature of the visit has no relation to the religious problems I have written of. But it may be pardonable to introduce it at this point, before the reflections I would offer are made. The same old-time courtesy in customs of which I have made mention showed itself in this way: that at the simple monastic supper table, Mr. Adams sat each night in full evening dress, just as, in his more leisured social life, he would have sat at an evening dinner. The monastic ménage and the heat of August, he would have said, should not dispense him from paying due respect to his hosts. So he dined in the world; so he would sup in a religious house. This rather intimate and gracious touch colors the picture of one whom we may well remember as a Knight of the Triclinium.

Emerson calls the monk "a prophet of the soul." When Henry Adams lived in Washington he chose Monsignor Fay to be his prophet. When the monsignor was requested to go to Rome and take up at the Vatican a matter connected with the war, Mr. Adams said: "Father Fay has gone to see the Pope. Things will be settled for us now."

Brooks Adams never forgot his visit to Portsmouth Priory, and thought he had left a prophet there. To one of the monks he wrote from England, where he had made some acquaintances at Downside Abbey: "I regard you as a benefactor. You have given me a new outlook on life." A few years later his health and mental powers weakened, and he died, the last, I think, of his immediate family.

The record might properly end here, but there is, in the life of one of the early members of the family, the story of an event which offers a startling contrast or sequence to what has been told above. During the Presidency of John Quincy Adams, a civic celebration was to take place in Cincinnati. The President was invited to make the principal address, and accepted. The Catholic bishop of the diocese was either present at the function, or read the report in print later. Its tone, irreligious, deist, or perhaps actually destructive of revealed religion, so shocked and pained the bishop that he thereupon registered a vow before God that a Christian monument, a Catholic church, should be built on the spot—in reparation. The church was built, and there it stood as witness to the Faith when Henry and Brooks Adams were laid in their graves.

Brooks Adams represents a type not uncommon in present times. To this son of a New England race, wealthy, cultivated, educated not only out of books but by venerable traditions, the old faith made its appeal with singular strength and tenacity. He longed for certainty, for an anchorage for his soul, for a home and peace therein. Calvinism, Unitarianism, ethics, philosophy—none of these could give him what he sought. I do not claim him as a convert to the Catholic Church. I am only allowed to hope that, in his last earthly interview with his Maker, he saw the light and found the peace he so sincerely desired. I may hope that he no longer stumbles in the way, but walks safely in his *patria*. But I do submit that such a vision as came to his soul, blurred it may have been, is that of many among modern non-believers in a revealed religion. They do not see; they grope. With these, naturalism, the fogs of modern thought, the crude and cheap theories of the popular pulpit and the popular magazine, the false philosophies of life, have little power.

America seems complacent, except when the stock market slumps; seems undisturbed by the possible intrusion into its own life of the frightful anti-God campaign of Russia. Yet there is, in our people, an undercurrent of thought and desire that runs the other way. There is another spirit that is working. Prosperity does not always produce peace; natural methods, legislation, do not bring it about; contentment is not found in dollars, in the steady round of pleasure-seeking, in automobiles, in moving pictures; education without God cannot make men moral. There are those who do not know, yet suspect that there is something higher, nobler, more satisfying.

It is a healthy sign in our national life that we now find serious men and women asking, What is God's place in human society? May we not hope that America has not become so vulgarized by pleasure, or commercialized by its pursuit of gain, but that the feast of Christ the King will, in its yearly celebration, remind men that God reigns and rules on earth?

COMMUNICATIONS

FOR LEPER COLONIES

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editor: Each year at this time the holy missionary nuns in charge of the Catholic leper colonies stretch out eager hands to the Society for the Propagation of the Faith for an alms which will brighten Christmas for the poor lepers. The only general appeal the society ever makes is for them.

Your readers may be moved to help us respond to this appeal for the poorest of Christ's flock—"the remnants of humanity." An alms directed to the Society for the Propagation of the Faith (Diocesan Office or National Office), will help many a self-sacrificing nun to spread Christmas cheer among those whose lives are in the hopeless grasp of leprosy.

RT. REV. WILLIAM QUINN,
Nat'l. Dir., The Society for the Propagation of the Faith.

IMPRESSIONISTIC WRITING

Kokomo, Ind.

TO the Editor: It would be a very easy matter for Mary Elizabeth Magennis to explain to Dr. McCarthy that, in "Distractions of a Churchgoer," she did not state that altar boys seat themselves at the reading of the Gospels, or that a thought from Saint Paul is in the Gospel. My understanding of the offending (?) paragraph is that it is quite orthodox in respect to posture of altar boys and as to where thoughts from Saint Paul are to be found in the Scriptures, if one will supply just a few words, which I shall take the liberty of adding in brackets in quoting four sentences:

"Now the reading of the Gospel. [The reading finished] The two chief altar boys set themselves. . . . The less important juvenile altar boy snickers. [From the text for the sermon I perceive that] It is a thought from Saint Paul for today."

Quite simple, isn't it?

REV. FRANCIS JOSEPH MUTCH.

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SUBSTANCE AND ACCIDENTS

Hillyard, Wash.

TO the Editor: Francis E. McMahon, in his communication of November 12, is correct in stating that the word "immaterial" may be taken in two meanings: (a) as "synonymous with 'spiritual,'" and (b) as indicating "the capability or indifference to existing in a material *or* a spiritual way." He is also correct in stating that in this latter sense "substance is rightly called immaterial," provided that he is speaking of substance in the abstract.

Neo-Scholasticus, however, in his communication of September 17, does not take the word "immaterial" in this latter sense, but as synonymous with spiritual. "Substance," he says, "is confessedly immaterial, according to Aristotelians. Now, between matter and spirit there is no mean, no *tertium quid*. . . . By the sheer force of logic, then, we are driven to the position, which is inescapable, of proclaiming openly and without equivocation, that material objects are really and substantially spiritual." Accordingly, in challenging the assertion of Neo-Scholasticus, I took the word "immaterial" in the sense in which he had interpreted it. And Mr. McMahon admits that "this challenge is well founded if 'immaterial' is taken to be synonymous with 'spiritual.'"

If the word be taken in the second sense, it denotes something that has been abstracted by the mind from all materiality; it is what Scholastics call *praecisive immateriale*. Hence, in this sense "immaterial" is applicable to abstract substance in the mind, but not to concrete substances outside the mind; for it is predicable of substance only in consequence of the abstracting act of the mind. When the word "immaterial" is applied to concrete substances existing outside the mind, as Neo-Scholasticus applied it, it can only mean spiritual.

The passage which Father Wagner, in his communication of November 12, quotes from Saint Thomas, and which ends with the words "per modum substantiae, cujus natura est tota in toto et tota in qualibet parte," does not mean that any material substance is whole in every part; it means merely that substance considered in itself and as unaffected by quantity, is whole in every part. Material substances, however, are always extended substances, and no extended substance can be whole in every quantitative part.

The following is a literal translation of what Father Vincent Remer, late professor at the Gregorian University in Rome, says on this subject: "A few, like the Complutensians in former times and recently Domet de Vorges and Mielle, contended that corporeal substance, even under quantity, has no quantitative parts, but that these parts belong to the quantity alone, and that the substance is whole in the whole and in every part, and that accordingly, when a division is made, not the substance but only the quantity is divided. This statement is rightly called by Goudin 'a most difficult opinion indeed and one that smacks of paradox' (Phil., P. IV, Disp. un., q. 2, a. 3), and furthermore it ought to be considered simply false, nor can it be fortified by the authority of Saint Thomas, unless essential totality be confused with quantitative totality" (Cosmologia, Editio Quinta, n. 112).

Nor is Christ's Body in the Eucharist an exception to the statement that no material substance is whole in every part. While it is true that the substance of Christ's Body is whole in every particle of the consecrated Host, the substance of His Body is not whole in every part of His Body, for this substance is not separated from its quantity. There is no need here of entering into the controversy between the Thomists and the anti-Thomists regarding the primary formal effect of quantity. Whether or not the diffusion of the substance of Christ's Body into integral parts—head, arms, etc.—is a formal effect of quantity, both Thomists and anti-Thomists will agree, I think, that at least when quantity is present the substance will not be quantitatively whole in any one of its parts. Since in the Eucharist the quantity does not produce that secondary effect which is called actual local extension, the substance of Christ's Body can be whole in each particle of the consecrated Host.

When Father Wagner says, "The question as to the nature of substance and accident is primarily and ultimately a question for the physicist to decide," I presume that he is led to this remark by the fact that some physicists take it upon themselves to theorize on the ultimate essence of things.

If a physicist should write a treatise on the biological problems of intussusception, it would simply mean that he was both a physicist and a biologist; it would not mean that biological problems belonged to the domain of physics. Similarly, the fact that some physicists discuss the ultimate essence of things, means only that they are both physicists and philosophers—sometimes very good physicists and very poor philosophers; it does not mean that the question as to the ultimate essence of things forms a part of the science of physics. I am taking the word "physics" here in its modern acceptation to mean one of the natural sciences; in its ancient acceptation it signified a part of philosophy.

The various subjects are collocated in the various sciences by the definition of each science, which indicates its scope; not by the fact that some scientist chooses to discuss the subject. Possibly there ought to be a law, but the fact is that at present there is no law, to keep a man who is expert in one science from voicing his theories on matters belonging to altogether different sciences. He does not, however, thereby incorporate those foreign subjects into his own science.

Since the philosopher has always had for his scope the quest of the ultimate explanations of things, he quite rightly claims for himself the question as to the ultimate essence of things. He should not, of course, be blind to the findings of science; for where the natural scientist ends, there the philosopher begins. Accordingly the philosopher should take into account the facts demonstrated by the natural scientist. In his study, however, of the ultimate essence of things, the philosopher may well be slow to accept the scientist's undemonstrated hypotheses and theories, for these are so frequently abandoned or reversed by the scientist himself that none but the rash would accept them unreservedly.

Father Wagner closes with the question: "Just how would he define electricity in this connection?" I beg to be excused. Electricity belongs to the science of physics, and if any physicists ever find out what it really is, then, perhaps, someone will give us a satisfactory definition. For a good definition, after all, is a brief statement explaining what a thing is.

REV. WILLIAM E. DONNELLY, S.J.

THE END OF A GOLDEN AGE

Chicago, Ill.

TO the Editor: My own note of revision having failed to intercept the galley-proofs of your issue for November 12, I trust you will kindly permit me to forestall possible reproof, and to say that when I spoke of Knole in my review of Miss Sackville-West's "The Edwardians," I wished to credit the "plunder" not to Elizabeth, but to Henry VIII, and the ownership of the house not to the "Earls Sackville," but to Thomas Sackville and his descendants who were the Earls of Dorset.

MORTON DAUWEN ZABEL.

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THE PLAY

By RICHARD DANA SKINNER

Art and Mrs. Bottle

THAT indefatigable team of producers, Macgowan and Reed, having decided to let Jane Cowl indulge in a repertory season have followed up the conspicuously charming production of "Twelfth Night" with a play by Benn W. Levy in which the author sincerely and aggressively wages war against the slogan, "art for art's sake."

On the whole, Mr. Levy proves himself a good strategist. For at least half of the play, it appears that the romantic Mrs. Bottle has returned to her husband (an exemplary sanitary engineer) for the express purpose of encouraging her long neglected children to follow her own life's example. That example, be it said, is not precisely perfumed with innocence or softened by domesticity. In fact, Mrs. Bottle left her husband shortly after the birth of their second child (now a grown young man) to wander around the world with an artist of somewhat promiscuous taste. This artist finally dumped her on the streets of Paris, but Celia Bottle preferred continuing her career to return to her sanitary engineer. Whereupon she became the companion of an ancient Russian prince.

As the play opens, we find the Bottle progeny taking up quite seriously with art—Michael Bottle as an embryo painter of considerable talent, and Judy Bottle as a less good painter with a determination to be an inspiration to someone else. Judy, in fact, is about ready to leave home and follow her mother's example—albeit unwittingly, since she and her brother have been brought up in the belief that their mother is dead. The maternal ghost, however, soon appears on the scene, preceded by a telegram.

Celia Bottle, in the person of Jane Cowl, is, of course, exceedingly attractive and is far more intelligent than her son, daughter or husband. Her Russian prince, it seems, is dead—which fact she finds ample reason for returning home and picking up the threads dropped twenty years earlier. For a woman of her quick wit and intuition, the job is not a hard one, and in a very short space of time Celia knows both her children much better than her astonished husband ever could and considerably better than they know themselves. She also discovers, to her considerable surprise, that the artist with whom her daughter is planning to share existence is none other than the artist who left Celia so shamelessly in Paris years earlier. Yet, in spite of these developments, one is still led to believe that Mrs. Bottle is about to encourage her children to break all bonds for the sake of "living a full life."

This makes the actual turn of the play all the more piquant and engaging. For it soon develops that Celia Bottle, though far from being a burned-out wreck, has had quite enough of life and art. Also enough of artists. She is not afflicted with any species of moral remorse. On the contrary, principles, as such, seem to play no part whatever in her life. She is a thoroughgoing pragmatist. Whatever works satisfactorily is good. What fails to work is bad. Hence, her diversions with the artist in early youth, and her companionship with the antique prince later on having failed to yield any large measure of satisfaction, Celia has come to the conclusion that sanitary engineering is a noble and useful profession, that so-called "creative art" is the mere passive mirroring of forces playing about the unhappy artist and that it is better to live and work for the sake of good plumbing than to produce a masterpiece. With these notions solidly planted in her pretty head, she sets about to break up her daughter's affair with the artist, to make a plumber rather than a painter out of her son, and to make her astonished husband more than ready to welcome her back to the home that pipes built.

As the play is well written and skilfully acted, it serves as unusually good propaganda for Mr. Levy's main idea. Quite obviously, however, it is shot through with enough shallow thinking to make it no more than passingly interesting. Pragmatic morals may end by arriving at about the same conclusions as morals based on genuine standards. But the pragmatic mind is never interesting in itself. It always reminds one of a reasonably intelligent small dog who finds after long experience the way to avoid being run over and the way to beg food successfully. The only trouble is that the most intelligent of small dogs is infinitely less intelligent than the stupidest small boy, and hence infinitely less interesting. The real pragmatist lacks enough imagination to form any intelligent judgments in advance of experience. And by the same token the pragmatist lacks enough balance to find the truth between extremes. Celia Bottle's early career is no more absurd than the extreme of her conversion to the anti-art crusade. She attacks "art for art's sake" only to fall into the opposite absurdity of plumbing for plumbing's sake!

In fact, the best part about this particular play is the lesson it furnishes, quite unconsciously, in the stupidity of doing anything temporal for its own sake. The rather important philosophy by which many men have become great, and by which a few have become saints—namely that all things temporal should be used for an end greater than themselves—has no place in the scheme of "Art and Mrs. Bottle." The notion that art may be as useful as good wash basins in enriching men's lives never enters Celia Bottle's head. (At Maxine Elliott's Theatre.)

Tonight or Never

THE PLAY selected by David Belasco as a starring vehicle for Helen Gahagan has only one merit. It gives its heroine several plausible opportunities for singing—and, as nearly everyone knows, Miss Gahagan is returning to the stage after a prolonged absence during which she has been training her excellent voice for an operatic career. In other words, since we are not permitted this year to hear Miss Gahagan sing "Tosca" at the Metropolitan (as she has sung it with considerable success in some of the capitals of Europe) we must content ourselves with hearing her sing the "Tosca" music on the Belasco Theatre stage.

For the rest, the play is an utterly stupid mess of absurdities, in which the old formula is rehashed, for obvious purposes, that a great artist cannot sing with real soul or emotion until she has lived and suffered—"living," in the present instance, meaning the tasting of illicit caresses from an energetic young man, and "suffering" meaning, presumably, the passing worry that the young man may not come back to her. As the entire action of the play lasts only thirty-six hours, and as the miraculous change is supposed to take place within that time, it is painfully obvious that the formula is brought forth solely and simply to furnish a few titillating scenes for the benefit of those

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who like that sort of entertainment. It may be true that years of hardship and emotional disturbance can soften and mellow an artist's work. It may even be that the tragic experience of a few terrible days can do as much. But to assume theatrically that one fleeting amorous experience can transform a singer overnight from talent to greatness is merely to advertise one's motives of showmanship from the housetops. So much for the play.

The matter of Miss Gahagan's own talent is much more important. There has frequently been good reason for believing that Miss Gahagan was destined to become one of our very best actresses—because of superlative physical equipment, and because of the breadth of her artistic insight and understanding. At her best, she could be extraordinarily good. At worst, she could never be very bad, except for a vocal trick that always marred much of her work—the sudden forcing of a shrill nasal twang. It was to be expected that the discipline of long vocal training would have done away with this distressing mannerism. Unfortunately, it has become more marked than ever. Miss Gahagan has let her speaking voice suffer at the expense of her singing voice—which may be well enough if she is to appear exclusively in grand opera. But if she is to continue to appear occasionally on the speaking stage, she must bring her voice somewhere near to parity with her acting skill and exceptional beauty. As for her singing voice, it carries many qualites which should make Miss Gahagan a real asset to opera, and especially to the more genuinely dramatic rôles, such as Santuzza, Louise or Thais. At present one feels that her voice has not been entirely well placed. Her high notes are excellent, and so is her middle to lower register. But there is a distinctly pinched and shrill quality to certain notes just above middle register which gives a sense of undue effort. Olive Fremstadt always suffered from the same defect within the range of a few notes. But, after all, if Miss Gahagan can give as much to opera lovers as Olive Fremstadt gave in her prime, we have many years of real pleasure ahead of us. (At the Belasco Theatre.)

Marseilles

THE AUTHOR of "Topaze," Marcel Pagnol, has given us in "Marseilles" a play that needs all the authenticity of native actors to catch the curious feeling of the south of France seaport. He has attempted to do something which essentially requires the genius of O'Neill to bring a sense of life and conviction. The play tells the story of a boy who tends a small bar for his father, and whose life is made miserable by the call of the sea and foreign parts. For a time, this call is hushed by his love for a neighbor's daughter. She, on her part, is so determined to keep him that she does not hesitate to give herself to him in the hope that this will bind him to her side. In the end, he has enough honor to be willing to stay, but the girl, after the fashion of girls in books and plays, discovers how miserable the sacrifice is going to make him, and deliberately sends him away from her in anger, so that in the end he follows the lure of distant lands.

Stories of this sort must either have the full force of native illusion, or else must be written with a sense of universal tragedy, so as to lift them from the pettiness of their local implications. "Marseilles" merely succeeds, with American actors, in being a very poor counterfeit of France, and in making the theme seem so unimportant that it never justifies its rather sordid material by evoking tragic proportions. It takes a master to turn wanderlust into tragedy, and Pagnol is seldom more than a clever character portraitist. (At Henry Miller's Theatre.)

BOOKS

Idylls and Monsters

Orpheus: Myths of the World, by Padraic Colum. New York: The Macmillan Company. $5.00.

THE FAVORITE stories, not of one person but of peoples, and races, that have come down to us through ages of telling and retelling, achieve something like the patina that enhances the handicraft of ancient peoples which has been saved out of time. This special quality, Mr. Colum, the poet, is specially fitted to give to the myths that he has retold here of nearly all the myth-making peoples of the world. He is a story-teller. This is one of the forms of his art that he most enjoys practising, the telling of stories to groups of children, like an inspired minstrel strayed into our days. That does not mean to say that the present volume is a juvenile, but, to enter into the kingdoms of fancy of this world where heroic beings behave in strange and unpredictable ways, one can profit by the counsel for entering that other kingdom and become like unto little children. This is no suggestion of namby-pambyism, but advice to forget those preoccupations with immediate material things that are so much with us, and marvel at the things far off. The attitude of marvel, of unsuspicious and unanalytic enjoyment, is a more intelligent approach to these myths than the petty and wearying scholarship that would bring the butterfly down out of its clear skies and, dismembering it, call it science to give long names to the lifeless members already losing their native color and returning to dust. Mr. Colum's Celtic poetry of speech is an element in which the myths take life and can be glimpsed whole by us, and enjoyed.

Through the stories of Isis and Osiris and Rê, of ancient Egypt, "Orpheus" leads the reader on to Babylonian mythology, monstrous and tortured like the relics of the manual arts that have been left to us. Then Persian mythology, that so influenced both Judaism and early Christianity, is reanimated in the story of Jamshid the Resplendent. Following are the Jewish stories of the angels and creation and the fall of man, and the confounding of the angel of death. Next are the most famous of the Greek myths and the Roman, then the Irish and Welsh. From the Nordic legends the author has taken the folk-epic of Finland and some of the little-known but most romantic legends of Iceland. From the Vedic mythology of the simple cattle-raising and agricultural peoples of India and from the philosophical Brahmanical and Buddhist stories, he gives examples, as well as of the Chinese and the Japanese and the Polynesian. Following are Peruvian, Central American and Mexican, and Zuni legends. By this mere cataloguing of the contents of the book I have tried to give some impression of its range, as I have previously tried to give some conception of the poetic, and therefore thrice accurate manner of the telling. It is a Homeric recital of the adventures not of two nations but of the legend world.

It is an imposing volume in make-up and is illustrated by Boris Artzybasheff with designs characteristic of the different civilizations from which the stories come. It is a beautiful book in form and spirit, a sort of glorified outline of mythology that should have a wide appeal to a cultured general public, and should find its place on the shelf of the poet and student beside Bulfinch's "Age of Fable," or "Beauties of Mythology," of which it is a modern counterpart that does credit to our times.

FREDERIC THOMPSON.

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Christians against Christ

A Yankee Adventurer: The Story of Ward and the Taiping Rebellion, by Holger Cahill. New York: The Macaulay Company. $3.50.

BY RETELLING the story of the so-called Taiping Rebellion in a book that is lucid, exciting and authoritative, Holger Cahill has performed a great service. He started out to write primarily about Frederick Townsend Ward, but the tremendous and terrible events that occurred in southern China in the fifties and early sixties of the last century could not be dealt with in a footnote, so a great part of the book is given over to an account of the Taipings. To ninety-nine out of a hundred contemporary readers it will all be new. Yet the Taiping Rebellion was not only the most terrible of all civil wars, it was one of the most important wars in all history. Modern China was born in its throes. It has strange and unparalleled aspects. There is shame in the record—the shame of Christian nations who put trade above religion and opium above souls. For the Taipings were Christians—"Christians of a sort," as our author says. Their Christianity was rooted in a missionary tract, twisted by a Baptist preacher, and given weird forms by the infiltration of pagan ideas and the naive, unintentionally sacrilegious vanity of a fanatical, half-mad genius. Yet it was a rejection of the old polytheism and an acceptance of God and His Son, and who can say how fertile a field it might not have offered for the coming of the true faith?

The founder of the Taiping movement was Hung Siu-tsuen, a poor scholar from the neighborhood of Canton. Done out of his due advancement by venal officials, he brooded; and into his brooding was dropped a missionary tract. Already obsessed by dreams of future greatness and dominion, when he became fired by the belief in One God and in Christ, the Son of God, he conceived the idea of uniting a religious mission with a great uprising to free his people from Manchu rule. In a few years Hung Siu-tsuen was complete master of many provinces in southern China; the peoples of these provinces were Christians —"of a sort"—and with the title of Heavenly King, Hung was not only temporal ruler but spiritual lord. Many of his doctrinal embodiments of Christian principles were admirable; the Ten Commandments, as he translated them, the hymns and poems he wrote, as reproduced by Mr. Cahill, are lofty, spiritual and truly Christian. But the success of his messianic work went to his head with typically Oriental results. Proclaiming himself the "brother" of the Saviour, he shut himself away from the world, leaving his rule and his wars to the hands of subordinate kings. Strange accretions overlaid and smothered the original naive purity of Taiping Christianity; and a headless state, vast though it was and bravely supported by its millions of subjects, staggered slowly to its doom. The imperial forces, holding Shanghai by the backing of Christian powers, shut the Taiping kingdom from the sea. Neither of the things they needed—true doctrine to free their nascent Christianity from superstition and decay, and arms and munitions to hold off their enemies—could enter to them.

Since the beginning of Western commerce with China, the balance of trade was always against Europe and America. The balance had to be restored by silver, and it was impossible to keep on pouring silver into the insatiable maw of China. There was only one other thing that could tip the balance—only one importation the Chinese would buy in quantity, and that was opium. Both the Taipings and the imperial government in these days forbade the entrance of the deadly drug; but the Pekin government was easily chastized by British and French

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NEXT WEEK

To cap a number which will be both important and delightful, we are happy to be able to announce THE PLEASURE OF POSSESSION, by Agnes Repplier. This is an essay with the flavor of a style that is unique and famous. . . . ONE WAR-TIME CHRISTMAS, by Mark O. Shriver, will awaken many reminiscences, and is a tender yet manly story for the season. . . . THE DEPENDENT CHILD AND HIS FAMILY, by the Reverend Bryan J. McEntegart, Director of the Division of Children of the Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of New York, is a revealing and suggestive article important at present because of the recent conference in Washington on child welfare, in which conference Father McEntegart participated. . . . "Personally I feel convinced that in spite of everything Germany will, in a comparatively short time, recover her position as the most productive and significant country in Europe," writes George N. Shuster in BERLIN, and writing from that capitol, cites further conclusions and their occasions. . . . THE PROGRESS OF THE SOVIET RELIGION, by Reverend F. J. McGarrigle, S.J., comes from a source in Rome where detailed information is available and tells in a specific manner the Soviet organization for active warfare in behalf of atheism. . . . SOLITUDE IN LITERARY RESEARCH, which most amusingly suggests the possibilities of prisons, was held over for this week. . . . There will be also reviews of recent books—books, those handy to send and always acceptable Christmas gifts.

expeditions and compelled to give up its prohibition; while the Taipings, with all the ardor of Christian zealots, would make no compromise with this evil.

Therefore Britain and France, holding tight to Shanghai, set about the destruction of the Taiping power. They pretended a hands-off policy, but they gave underhanded aid until victory was so clearly possible that they dared come into the open. It was while the scales still wavered that Frederick Townsend Ward arrived in Shanghai; a Yankee adventurer, sprung of the seafaring race of Salem. His purpose in coming was undoubtedly, says Mr. Cahill, to join the Taipings, for their cause was then popular in America. Nothing is more illuminating, by the way, than the study of how the praise lavished on these Chinese Chistians in the 1850's by English and American writers turned into blackguarding denunciation, with all the typical propagandist stories of horrors and atrocities, when in the 1860's the Western nations definitely decided to crush these "bandits" who were guilty of the crime of banning opium.

Frederick Ward never joined the Taipings. This biographer charitably assumes that what he heard from all Europeans and Americans in Shanghai convinced him that the followers of the Heavenly King were really bandits and perverters of Christianity. Perhaps it was so, and we can look upon Ward as a high-minded soldier fighting in what seemed to him a high cause; but the known facts permit a less pleasant interpretation. Ward could have had no illusions about the character of the Taotai Wu and the banker Taki who financed his first expedition against the Taipings. The suspicion persists that this Yankee soldier of fortune who undertook to capture cities for a fixed price in cold cash, cared little for the right and wrong of things, and nothing for the sacredness of human life; his career, stirring as it was, and marked by the highest personal bravery—which eventually cost him his life—was that of a wholesale murderer, by trade and for money and honors. Though Ward and his fellow-American assistants seem to have done little wanton massacring, yet the imperial forces, their allies, slew and burned ferociously. After Ward's death Major Charles George Gordon succeeded to the force which Ward created and employed the strategy which Ward had proved effective. The ready pens of British journalists and historians have created a legend for "Chinese" Gordon while Ward's name has been forgotten. Only the Chinese, who built a temple to him, honor him as a saint—because he first taught them to fight with Western ways and weapons.

SHAEMAS O'SHEEL.

Once Again the Brontës

Three Virgins of Haworth: Being an Account of the Brontë Sisters, by Emilie and Georges Romieu; translated by Roberts Tapley. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, Incorporated. $3.00.

IT IS curious, it is even a little enigmatic, how persistent seems the fascination of those three fated sisters of Haworth for the browsing and emancipated intellect of our own generation. And when that intellect happens to be Gallic, the enigma grows almost into a paradox. One fancied that Abbé Dimnet's sympathetic yet analytical biography of the Brontë sisters, admirably Englished about two years back, had really said the last word on the subject: or if last words are scarcely sayable in art, at least so satisfying a word that to attempt the appraisal over again must seem largely a work of supererogation. Yet here are authors (once again French) and publishers (once again American) attempting it with considerable gusto. And

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as a romantic biography of Anne, Emily and Charlotte (a critique of their literary work is scarcely attempted) the book succeeds vividly. Once again the story of those restricted lives, those half-frustrated but unquenchable gifts, the wistfulness at war with Puritan stoicism, the few joys and the many sorrows, is told with a wealth of emotion. Is there not, indeed, a superfluity of emotion?

When, in the fanciful prologue to the present volume, the authors conjure up the vision of a mastiff stretching and yawning "like some magnificent orchid," we are prepared for what used to be called "purple pasages"—and we are not to be disappointed. From first to last there is a tendency to sentimentalize where sentimentality is particularly not needed, to melodramatize where the drama is itself sufficient. This hectic quality is the first and fundamental fault of a book built upon a good deal of loving research, written with unfailing if impressionistic vigor. And its second fault is in the minor but still unnecessary matter of translation, where so classic and—to quote Maurice Francis Egan's delightful phrase— "mouth-filling" a word as "quadriga" on one page jostles a provincialism like "the Reverend Brontë" on another.

KATHERINE BRÉGY.

A Norse Master

Vagabonds, By Knut Hamsun. New York: Coward-McCann, Incorporated. $3.00.

KNUT HAMSUN'S books have been translated into twenty-three different languages, which is a record for a modern author. If any one quality could be isolated which would explain this universal appeal, I believe that it must be the common humanity of Hamsun's people. They are elemental human beings. Yet each is individual. Paradoxically this trait of lonely individuality in the topless and bottomless universe where the simplest accidents of circumstance seem curiously strange, is one most common to our humanity. Hamsun's people are solitaries even in the mad escapes of love and work, as they are in their moments of brooding, stoic facing of the limitations of their destinies. One may regret that none is ever godly, no one ever attempts to soar into the spiritual realms—but at least they are all goodly, or part goodly. Even those that are morally malformed, have still the quality of humankindness that makes them laughable, forgivable, even lovable. God in the case of Hamsun's books is supplied by the point of view of the writer, which in turn, of course, is the point of view of the reader. I mean this reverently. No other writer that I know of can see his people so completely as God must see them.

And the nature in the midst of which they live, is untrammelled. It is never mere garden scenery or romantic nature. It is essential nature, and respected as such; in no way patronized and undignified by pet names.

In "Vagabonds" Hamsun returns to the large theme and simple people that before were most notable in "Growth of the Soil," "The Women at the Pump," "Wanderers," and "Benoni." This vein is distinguished from his erratic themes dealing with not normal, or artistic temperaments, pursued in "Hunger," "Pan," "Victoria," and most recently dealt with in his story of a collection of freaks dying of consumption on a mountain top, "Chapter the Last." This latter vein of his does not depart from the qualities of which we have spoken, the common humanity of the people and the imminence of nature, but the point of view is that of the clever, ironical artist, a decided drop from the other.

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"Vagabonds" is unmistakably great, as was "Growth of the Soil." It is the story of a growth of a little community near the sea and near the soil in everything, of how those who go away cannot sever their ties with the little community, of how they bring back to it from the outside world some things, different things, some that remain outlandish and are cast off, and others that are taken in for the community's good and evil; and of how those who go away leave bits of themselves, memories, attachments, scattered over the world, making them forever rootless, restless, pulled at with tiny conflicting nostalgias. A wonderful, satisfying book. A solid book. Solid as a mountain. It will be there to return to, perhaps wreathed with new aspects, new atmospheres, yet familiar. I hope to return to it many times, and scale to the peak again, and have a look around.

ALLEN RUMFORD.

Far East Personalities

Three Wise Men of the East, by Elizabeth Bisland. Chapel Hill, North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press. $3.00.

The Life of Chinghis Khan, by B. Y. Vladimirtsov. Boston: Houghton Mifflin and Company. $2.50.

OF THESE two books, one may readily say, the latter will be referred to as having been compiled from records which long and careful criticism has placed among the important sources of Asiatic history; that of Miss Bisland will live, because of a happy skill in word picture painting, though persons versed in Oriental history will certainly dispute the accuracy of her verbal labels for Hideyoshi and Shah Jehan. To label an expert soldier a parvenu may provoke a literary smile, but it will merely ruffle the mind of anyone acquainted with the Japanese history of Toyotomi Hideyoshi; while the suggestion that Shah Jehan was only a great lover is distinctly unfair to the man who conquered Bijapur, annexed Ahmadnagar, and resumed control over Badakshan and Kandahar. The description of Chien Lung as a magnificent emperor might stand. Certainly Chien Lung and Kangshi were outstanding figures in the Manchu dynasty which vanished in the revolution of 1911.

In picking these three personages, one Indian, one Chinese and one Japanese, there is perhaps a reminiscent, if indefinite, idea that coming from three distinct areas of Asia they might pose as three great Asiatics, but to parody the three Magi of biblical lore in this way is hardly fair to the men or to Asia.

In this volume there is many a page of facile writing, many a paragraph that is pleasingly turned, such as the description of the effect of the alluring charm of India upon her fierce conquerors. Miss Bisland, however, uses terms quite modern to describe conditions quite ancient. Thus she mentions coolies in the days of Chien Lung. The word "coolie" is a name kindly given by foreigners to a class of Chinese laborers whom we call "navvies" and menials. It is not a Chinese or English word. In Turkish it means a slave. In Tamil it is a word for wages. There are paragraphs such as that on page 186, which perhaps more careful revision might have altered. But the book is well worth perusal by those to whom the Orient is more than a pleasure ground. The constructive skill of the author's work is marred by the lack of an index and the absence of references for passages quoted, and apparently relied upon, to build up the serious side of these pleasing essays on "Three Wise Men of Asia."

This cannot be said of "The Life of Chingis Khan," which is a remarkably complete biography of this mighty soldier and

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administrator. The author of this book carefully gives in the introduction, an interesting summary of the works on which he relies for his facts, and being himself a student of Mongolia and its language, there is displayed throughout the volume a definite current of reality and scholarship, as pleasing to find as it is to peruse. Dr. Vladimirtsov evidently knows his subject, though one is a little perturbed to find that he does not mention Howorth's "History of the Mongols" nor the more recent work of Aurel Stein and that of Baddeley; but to anyone acquainted with the limited resources from which may be reconstructed the life, personality and actuating principles of the great conqueror, Chinghis Khan, it will seem that this new life is well compiled and interestingly placed before the reader. Perhaps chapter x, dealing with the military genius of Chinghis Khan when in China, his methods of discipline, and the handling of the many soldiers of differing nationality, will ultimately appeal to the general body of readers.

It is to be hoped that the publishers of this excellent biography, now that they have discovered a man who knows his subject, will not desert him for the tales of the modern tourist Munchausens, whose banalities have been so steadily thrust upon the American public.

BOYD-CARPENTER.

Romance and History

Mr. Coleman, Gent., by Enid Dinnis. St. Louis: B. Herder and Company. $2.00.

FOR THE setting of her latest novel, Enid Dinnis has selected the troubled days of Charles II, a reign when Catholic hopes in England grew dim and Protestant daring mounted high, when faith produced martyrs whose careers are still a matter of record.

The first part of the book is fictional, the latter part historical—the life story of Edward Coleman, one of the victims of the Titus Oates plot. So skilfully has the author done her work, however, that there is apparent no place where fact and fiction meet—the joining is invisible. The character of her hero has the unity of reality, from his gay days in London and his years as secret private secretary to Charles, through his career as court gentleman and his end as a traitor.

The book abounds in dramatic situations, and it is noteworthy that there is a basis of fact for most of them—that men and women did suffer and die in just these ways in seventeenth-century England, in an endeavor to put over the "plot magnificent": the winning back of England to the Catholic faith. The secret Mass in the little garret, the reception of Edward into the Church, the arrest and imprisonment of the Mistress of Wildwood, the first confession and the last of Edward, the death of King Charles—all are true pictures of the period. The devotion of the king and Coleman for each other lends interest—the straightforward man of the gentry and the puzzling tragic monarch, in whom there seems something of the spirit of Don Quixote—a Don half laughing at himself for tilting at the windmills of intrigue.

Miss Dinnis throughout keeps her readers aware of that deathless surge of the spirit which carried these hunted men and women to a fate that seemed doom to their enemies, but which meant merely a more vivid life to people who regarded martyrdom not as disease but as larger life. Excellently done also are her descriptions of the results of the fusing of ordinary living with the valuable element of joy, especially that awareness of it which the Catholic spirit produces.

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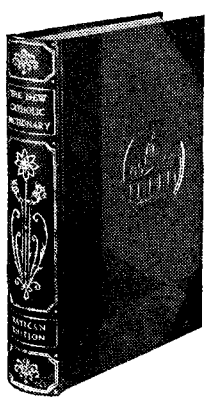

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Briefer Mention

A Note in Music, by Rosamond Lehmann. New York: Henry Holt and Company. $2.50.

THAT unaccountable section of the public which acclaimed so overwhelmingly Miss Lehman's first novel, "Dusty Answer," has already shown itself much more temperate to this, its successor. By the same token, "A Note in Music" is a better book. Its material is less sensational, its approach more simple and ordered. The reader who was incapable of responding to the curious mood of exaltation which sustained Miss Lehman throughout her researches into the perversities and dramatic frustrations of the jungle adolescents of "Dusty Answer" will find this more objective and restrained account a welcome change. Miss Lehman has not yet developed, if indeed she ever will develop, beyond the point of considering despair in a vacuum—that is despair unrelated to conscience or code, despair proceeding from boredom and romantic disappointment—as somehow very significant. Her heroine here is a middle-class Englishwoman with a dull and kindly husband; she meets a beautiful youth who flashes across her horizon and then disappears into the starry spaces of gentility beyond her ken. Her gain, or her loss, from the experience are nil. She does not grow, she does not learn: she takes no job, for instance, adopts no baby, plants no garden, opens no soup-kitchen for the poor. She does not even commit suicide. But her story, within its own limits, has its own pathos, and it is told with the real competence and power to hold which Miss Lehman brought out of her first perfervid achievement.

The Life of Christ in Woodcuts, by James Reid. New York: Farrar and Rinehart, Incorporated. $3.00.

THIS is evidently one of those anomalous creations, a gift book, and it is an excellent one which should be most acceptable and appropriate at Christmas time. The artist is a young man of twenty-three who resides in Philadelphia. This of course has no particular significance except to distinguish who he is not. His woodcuts are well conceived and sensitively executed, without freakishness. Altogether the book is well planned to please those who would be interested in its subject, and they are many. The illustrator's art has so nearly disappeared from adult book publications in recent years, that it is interesting to see its revival in a book all to itself. There is no reason why this form of story-telling should be confined to woodcuts, and one hopes it won't be.

CONTRIBUTORS

Ernest Brace is the author of "Commencement" and is a contributor to various periodicals.

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Katherine Burton is assistant editor of the *Redbook Magazine*.

In last week's issue, the title "Reverend" was incorrectly placed before the names of Mr. Becket Gibbs and Mr. D. B. Gray, lay oblates of the Order of Saint Benedict, and omitted from the name of Father R. Traill, an English priest.—The Editors.

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